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THE GAUCHO THEME IN ARGENTINE LITERATURE

BY

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(A.B., BOSTON UNIVERSITY, 1903)

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

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## THE GAUCHO THEME IN ARGENTINE LITERATURE

### I. Introduction

#### A. Statement of the Theme

In the largest and richest of the Spanish American republics, Argentina, there exists a native literary art which is distinct in its productions from those of the rest of the Spanish speaking world, and forms a literary entity "muy criollo", with a unity of inspiration, atmosphere, and subject, which definitely and easily classifies it.

The work of this paper is to trace briefly the origin, the development and the decadence of this national literature called by the Argentines "la literature gauchesca" which is "racy of the soil", as is no other American literature, and presents a continuity of production for nearly two centuries.<sup>1</sup>

#### B. Importance as a National Movement

The gaucho and the pampa which brought him forth and nurtured him, and from which he is inseparable in literature as in life, served as the inspirational nucleus for a great body of indigenous literature ranging from crude oral expressions to unmistakable heights of literary art, and running the gamut of literary forms, folklore, epic poetry, lyric poetry, patriotic ode, prose narrative, essay, novel and drama, forming as we shall see a really national movement.

#### C. The Parallel Current of the International Type

At the outset it must, however, be noted that this is

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Uruguay, once a part of Argentina, had a similar development on a smaller scale.



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only one phase of Argentine literary development, for contemporaneous with this distinctly regional type, there existed as well, a development of pure Castillian literature with all the influences of the different European schools of literary art. This conventional type, more or less negligible in value as it was in its Argentine development, has little in common with the type treated in this paper, for it runs true to the form of the continental productions which its erudite authors, fearful of being provincial, consciously imitated as the only types of culture and real art, in an internationalism quite proper to cosmopolitan Argentina.

#### D. Recognition of the Value of the National Art

In contrast, however, to those who scorned the national muse, practically all the writers of note during the latter two thirds of the nineteenth century sought inspiration for some of their best work in the great Argentine desert and its picturesque gaucho, and thus there was built up on this theme a literature, voluminous, virile, and wholly Argentine.

Appreciation of the value of this work was strongly felt in Spain while many Argentines, purists in language and blood, still deprecated bringing it to the front as a national art. The following quotations from Gaspar de Nuñez, Spanish poet, shows recognition of its intrinsic worth.<sup>1</sup>

The most interesting of Spanish American literature were the gaucho productions because of their originality, their flavor of the soil, the singular vigor of their ideas, the picturesqueness of their forms, and at the same time the ruggedness and beauty of their structure and expression.

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### E. Interest in the Subject

This subject, well recognized as it is as a clearly defined current of Spanish American literature, and in fact, the only really native strain in the two Americas that has developed continuously from the legendary folklore to all types of cultured productions, has been almost entirely neglected in literary histories in English, so that there is very little information on the subject available, except in Spanish or French.

For these reasons and because of its importance as a national literary movement it seemed well worth while to gather, largely from Argentine sources, a brief history of the gauchesco literary art, a task especially pleasing to one who has, although briefly, felt the spell of the pampa, and who has been thrilled at the sight of a solitary ombú lightly but clearly etched against a sunset sky.

### F. The Method of Treatment

Adequate treatment is impossible here for so deeply is it imbedded in the literature of the country that its complete unfolding would be almost equivalent to writing a literary history of Argentina.

The aim of this paper will be, therefore, to present a general survey of the field, an analysis of the most important types, and a more detailed study of a few of the best productions, proceeding in the natural order of development from the folklore--oral, then written-- to the work of



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the cultured authors who skilfully imitated the form and language of the earlier type, and afterward to the work of the followers of the school of Echeverría who brought the national note of the gaucho and the pampa into all the cultured literary forms. This does not constitute a chronological development for the types were contemporaneous.

## II. Main Body of Theme

### A. The Gaucho Protagonist

To understand the literature to which the Argentine gaucho has given his name, we must know something of the protagonist, the "cowboy" of the plains of Argentina, the one human type in the two Americas whose life and exploits have been so copiously extolled in song and story that they form a great homogeneous literary unit, inspired and inspiring.

#### 1. Derivation of the Name Gaucho

There have been several theories offered as to the derivation of the name gaucho but none seems adequate or authentic. There is apparently no validity in linking the name with the French word "gauche" as has been suggested, but there is more plausibility in the theory of an evolution through the Brazilian Portuguese, from the Latin word "gaudeo"-- Spanish "gozo"--the explanation being that the gaucho is one who "enjoys" life on the pampa.<sup>1</sup> This seems rather far-fetched, and more credence may be placed in a possible origin in the word "guichúa", the Indian word for one orphaned or abandoned, this word becoming guacho, then gaucho. As the

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solitary life of the gaucho is a favorite theme in the early literature this derivation is plausible but not authentic.

The consensus of worth whole opinion, however, seems to be that the derivation is still unknown and thus the gaucho remains unique in name as in personality.

## 2. Racial Origin

According to racial classification, the gaucho is a combination of the Andalusian, that is the Spanish and the hispanicized Arab, for Andalusians were the early settlers of the Argentine--and a native Indian strain-- a mingling of blood called euphemistically "criollo" to avoid the more servile "mestizo" which usually designates one less than half European. There was no contumely attached to this mixture of blood, for the Spanish colonists, unlike the English, brought no women with them and intermarriage with the higher type of Indian woman was common, and was advocated by the governing powers in the colonies and in Spain. The gaucho becomes, then, a social class rather than a race; a national evolution of his racial heritage, modified and blended by a unifying force, the great pampa, which as a melting pot, tended to form its inhabitants into a pattern recognizable and distinct regardless of region or time. For he shows little differentiation whether we see him as the horseman of the great central plain of Argentina, or on the higher plateaus near Chile and Bolivia, or again, as the nomad of the Patagonian desert. Nor does time change him so long as he keeps his blood free from



solitary life of the gaucho is a favorite theme in the early literature this derivation is plausible but not authentic. The consensus of worth while opinion, however, seems to be that the derivation is still unknown and thus the gaucho remains unique in name as in personality.

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the "gringo" strain of the later immigrant, for little or no difference can be discerned in the gaucho as painted by the early writers such as Hidalgo and Ascásubi or the type in the great epic of Hernández, Martín Fierro, written seventy-five years later.

### 3. Physical Appearance

The physique and bearing of the gaucho proved that he was, in truth, a hybrid of the aboriginal blood and that of the soldier of Flanders who became in America the "conquistador".

The typical gaucho was muscular and lithe of body as were his Indian ancestors, but the Spanish blood had refined his features so that he was often rather handsome, with a clear olive complexion tanned to a darker hue by the desert sun and wind. His eyes were dark with the keen direct gaze of one who must be ever alert to pierce the pampa distances for an enemy or a friend, or perhaps for the truant members of his herd of cattle.

Agile and supple as he was, riding never tired him, and entire days in the saddle still left him ready lightly to tread the measures of the village dance when his good fortune brought him to a pampa settlement for the night.

Strong of arm and sure of aim he had to be, for the law of the "survival of the fittest" was the law of the pampa, as well.

for cutting his food, or a weapon to protect him from man or beast. The facha was shorter than a sword, with

Walter Haden: Argentine Plains and Andine Glaciers: New York: Scribner Co. 1911 Chap. 4, p.80-81.

Speedy: Augmentative of facha from two Latin felx, a curved knife.



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#### 4. Dress

The description of the gaucho costume given by Walter Larden<sup>1</sup> is much the same as we see in the rather romantic looking pictures of the typical gaucho.

The clothing varied somewhat with the climate and the season but rather generally the gaucho wore a brimmed hat with a handkerchief tucked into it to protect his neck, and another gay colored one around his throat knotted at the front. He wore to protect him from the wind and rain a poncho--an oblong cape of vicuña or "guanaco", with a hole in the center for the head, a garment that is still a favorite winter covering in the country. He also wore a loose shirt, and a "chiripá", a sort of cloth scarf or shawl, was tucked into his belt and covered one hip and thigh. His trousers were of wool or linen according to the climate, and the common baggy type were called "bombachas" and were thrust into high boots of untanned horsehide. Sometimes he wore heavy spurs also, although they were seldom used to urge speed on his beloved horse.

An important part of his costume was the "tirador", a broad belt with pockets which he usually kept filled with coins to supply his needs in the little villages to which his journeys brought him. Into this belt at the back was stuck his trusty knife "el facón"<sup>2</sup>, which served him as a utensil for cutting his food, or a weapon to protect him from man or beast. The facón was shorter than a sword, with

<sup>1</sup>Walter Larden: Argentine Plains and Andine Glaciers: New York: Scribner Co. 1911 Chap. 4, p.60-61.

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a sharp daggerlike point and a broad flat blade. It was his only weapon except for the lasso and the bolas used for capturing cattle or wild animals.

A picturesque figure he was to the pampa maiden when he came to woo, and an anonymous poet thus describes her favorite gallant:

Sombrerito copa alta.  
Cinto a la moda.  
Así lo quiero al gaucha  
Cuando enamora.

### 5. Mode of Life

The life of the gaucha was primitive indeed, for most of it was spent on the broad pampa which stretched to the far horizon unbroken save by a majestic ombú, or a thicket of low bushes or more rarely a brook or a small clear lake.

Hernández in Martín Fierro describes the gaucha destiny:<sup>1</sup>

Vive el águila en su nido  
El tigre vive en la selva  
El zorro en la cueva ajena.

Y en su destino inconstante  
Solo el gaucha vive errante  
Donde la suerte lo lleva.<sup>1</sup>

Immense herds of half savage cattle were his to govern, but for the most part he let them wander at will, following the water-ways and sometimes taking long treks over the desert. With his faithful companion, his well loved horse, he followed their migrations and when at night he lay down to rest, with his head to the east to keep himself oriented, his horse was beside him. So inseparable, in fact, were they

<sup>1</sup>Canto XXXIII Estrofa VII



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El torero en la cueva ajena.  
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that the gaucho was often called the "centaur of the Pampa".

This Arab of the Argentine desert kept himself in good health by his outdoor life and by his simple habits of food and drink. Alcohol was scarce and expensive on the pampa and that may explain his abstemiousness, but it is true that until, with the mixture of immigrant blood, deterioration came to the gallant race, a drunken gaucho was almost unknown.

After long absences from his native village, it was a great joy to return to the ranch, for a warm welcome awaited him and a village dance was almost sure to be prepared to celebrate his return, for his zest for music and dancing was a part of his Andalusian heritage, and these reunions were pleasant anticipations or delightful memories in his hours of solitude.

#### 6. Speech

One who, today, tries to read the older gaucho ballads will find it impossible without constant reference to a glossary, because the everyday speech of the pampa--and this is the language of the older poetry--has so far diverged from Castillian that many of the words are unrecognizable.

This speech is, nevertheless, early Andalusian Spanish, modified because of lack of education, and a mixture of Indian words, which vary in different regions on account of the difference in the languages of the tribes. Added to this was the vocabulary of the ranch, words and phrases coined to meet



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the necessities of pampa life and thought.

Compulsory education and easy communication with the city have changed this "jargon" as Mitre called it, and today only a few idioms of it survive in general use, although if a modern writer wishes to give pampa "atmosphere", he frequently makes his characters speak in the gaucho vernacular, as did the older writers who so well imitated the popular form.

## 7. Musical Instruments

From his mixture of Indian and Andalusian blood came the gaucho's passion for music for it was his inheritance from both sides, and so he was able to solace his lonely vigils on the pampa by the music which he remembered or improvised. Like his ancestors in faraway Spain he loved most the guitar, but if a real one was denied him he often constructed one called a charango from the quirquincho, a kind of turtle. Some of the early gauchos used the quena, an Indian flute to accompany their songs. Sometimes other instruments were used by the gauchos at the country dances and three kinds might be combined to form a sort of rustic orchestra. These were a wind instrument such as a flute, a stringed instrument as the guitar, and then something to be struck rhythmically as the tambor, a sort of small drum. On some of the larger ranches the European harp was a favored accompaniment to the country dance.



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Most of the instruments were small and light, in order that they might be easily transported from ranch to ranch, or might be carried with ease by the gaucho rider in his journeys over the pampa.

## 8. The Gaucho in History

Just as the gaucho is distinct in his literature and his personality, so is he a distinct figure in the history of Argentina, and every period has its gaucho heroes as well as its gaucho songs.

### a. Early Wars

The frontiersman who from the time of the earliest colonists held in check the marauding Indians and sang his songs of peace and war in a dialect hardly Spanish, became the gaucho of a later date, but as a personage he was first definitely presented in 1776 in the war with the Portuguese over boundary disputes, when as a soldier and a singer he was an outstanding "criollo" figure markedly distinct from the Spanish soldiers. He had been trained on the pampa to be ever ready for defence, and the characteristics received from his Indian ancestors which had enabled him to survive on the pampa, now made him a good soldier, and warfare became for him an avocation much to his taste.

Again in 1806 and 1807 came danger to the "patria", for England at war with Spain, sent an expedition to besiege Buenos Aires. Once more from his pampa home came the gaucho ready and willing for the fray, with characteristics well



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defined and his poetry already known, although little had as yet been written.

Singing his songs of cheer and defiance, and fighting as one already trained to warfare, he helped in pushing back the enemy, and by his aid this important city was saved from English dominion.

#### b. War for Independence

Again, in 1810 he was at the front in the fight for independence from the country whose honor he had recently so gallantly defended, and as a definite personage he sang and fought his way to freedom over a weary stretch of years.

He endured hardship with the army of San Martín and helped to cheer by his songs his companions on the difficult march over the Andes to Chile, and he shared with his beloved leader the glory of defeating the Spanish in the decisive battle of Ayacucho. Suffering was his in the border warfare as well, but his song made him forget his woes, and kept him ready for the heroic self-sacrifice historically accepted as his gift toward his country's independence.

#### c. Civil Wars

Again in the Civil Wars 1830-1834, which were the result of the uprising of the uneducated country against the government policies of the educated city or, as Sarmiento, reversing the order, called it "civilization against barbarity", when the gaucho leader, Manuel Rosas, seized the government at Buenos Aires, he was aided by the soldiers, who, recently



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returned from warfare to the free air of the country, perhaps felt that their struggles had been in vain, for freedom from Spain had meant only a change of masters of the same type, for the old colonial spirit was strongly entrenched in the government until overthrown by the federalist Rosas.

All the gauchos, however, did not uphold the cause of Rosas, for a gaucho army came to the aid of Montevideo besieged by land and by sea by the forces of Rosas for nine years (1841-1850). These gauchos of the Unitarian<sup>1</sup> party improvised and sang so well that some of the cultured Argentine writers either in the army or in exile in Montevideo imitated their meters, and furious invectives were hurled against Rosas in his own gaucho verse, and the irony of it was that his enemies wrote better than the friends whom he paid to extol his work, as is proved by the poems that have survived.

On both sides the gauchos fought and sang, and, as martyrs to whichever cause they espoused, fell victims to the facón of one of their own class, who perhaps was fighting for a cause, or perhaps merely because he loved a fight.

When peace came at last to the troubled nation with the fall of Rosas at Caseros in 1852 and of his successor Urquiza in 1854, the gaucho went back to his pampa to pursue again the tasks of the peaceful country life.

<sup>1</sup> The Unitarians believed in centralized government. The Federalists (the Rosas party) advocated State control as in the United States. Although Rosas was overthrown, his opponents finally accepted his policy and this is the government of Argentina today.



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#### d. The Final Unequal Struggle

Soon, however, there came to conquer him an insidious enemy against whom his facón was of no avail and his struggle in vain. The European immigrant, trained in agriculture and tired of old world domination, came to the new world republic to swell the country population hitherto sparse and homogeneous, and to furrow with the plow of civilization the unmarked stretches of the broad pampa. This was the beginning of the end for the Arab of the great South American desert, whose supple agility balked at being cramped by the hard tasks of agricultural labor, and whose spirit could not brook the restrictions of the new life being forced upon him. And so today on the Argentine plain the successor of the gaucho, the peon, menial in station and lowly in spirit has become almost a serf on the gaucho's wide domain.

#### e. Summary

Thus we have seen that in all periods of Argentine political development, the gaucho has taken so important a part that it might well be said that the history of Argentina was written in gaucho blood, for the echoes of all the important events may be found in his poetry some of which fortunately has been preserved although most of it has been lost.

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the struggle of progress where the city reached out and thrust its education and its civilization over the pampa vastness, forcing to defeat and deterioration the romantic figure of the son of the broad free plains, the picturesque gaucho who had no place in the new pampa--all of these epochs of history may be traced in gaucho verse.

### 9. Economic Contribution

We have seen the importance of the gaucho in the political development of Argentina, and he played no lesser role in the economic development, for the pampa, even before the days of agriculture, was the chief source of Argentina's wealth, and the gaucho as master of the great herds of cattle helped to found large fortunes although he himself shared little of the wealth unless, as rarely, through marriage or inheritance, he became the owner of an "estancia" and thus instead of going down in the social scale as was true of most, he became an individual of power, economically and politically, and kept in his heart the glories of bygone days.

### 10. The Gaucho Character

#### a. General Characteristics

Objectively we have studied the gaucho, but that which is most important, that which made him distinct in the popular literary art, both as author and protagonist of a great body of literature, was the subjective gaucho whose mental, moral and spiritual characteristics so well



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expressed themselves in his lyric poetry. The more complete development of his character will come in a later part of this paper for his poetry will speak for him and needs no interpreter.

In general he was a product of his blood and his environment as his characteristics show, whether he is the patriot fighting his country's battles, or the ranger of the desert singing, dancing and riding at will over his native plains. He is no longer the Indian whose fatalistic melancholy, stern sense of justice, stoic endurance of suffering and hardship, and passionate love for the free haunts of his native plain are distinctly his heritage. Nor is he the Spaniard whose language, religion and sense of honor are his in a modified degree, and whose love of music has changed not at all. He is instead a combination of all these, the gaucho, whose character is his own, a product of his pampa environment which, while it made him unlettered by depriving him of schooling, yet taught lessons that were in themselves an education.

#### b. His Code of Honor

His deep breaths of the pampero<sup>1</sup> imbued him with a love of freedom and a chafing at restraint, and so at times, he became lawless for no legal penalties could reach him in his wide domain. Like the knights in the days of chivalry he was a law unto himself and defended his honor and avenged his wrongs in single combat, but his weapon was his trusty

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The cool southwest wind



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knife, and never did he take unfair advantage, and never did his enemy receive a stab in the back. His strict code of honor demanded fair play.

### c. Religious Philosophy

The gaucho alone on the pampa with no interpreter of organized religion to guide his thoughts, became a sort of religious mystic invited to contemplative worship by the mysteries of nature. In his mind there was a perfect communion between him and his Maker, who became real to him as did the arch enemy the devil, and he felt that there would be meted out to him tangible rewards or punishments according to his deserts. He believed in the power of prayer to heal the spirit and bestow material or spiritual favors, he revered the graves of the dead, and the crucifix and the cross were sacred to him. The voice of his own conscience was his moral guide, and truth and honor as he interpreted them were his Holy Writ.

He had no churches, so he made the starry arch of the heavens with its mystic Southern Cross, the encircling dome of his house of worship as well as the roof under which his tired limbs relaxed in sleep.

Hernández in Martín Fierro thus expresses the gaucho's religious contemplation of the heavens:

and he improvised soulful words most of which, unfortunately, because of the very spontaneity of their composition, have been lost to posterity.



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Martín Fierro says:

Así me hallaba una noche  
Contemplando las estrellas  
Que le parecen mas bellas  
Cuando uno es más desgraciado.  
Y que Dios las haya creado  
Para consolarse con ellas.

Les tiene el hombre cariño  
Y siempre con alegría  
Ve salir las tres marías;  
Que si llueve, cuando escampa  
Las estrellas son la guía  
Que tiene el gaucho en la pampa.<sup>1</sup>

His religion, then, is mystic, at times almost pantheistic and, according to dogma, indefinable, but a necessary part of the gaucho philosophy so quaintly expressed in his poetry which sometimes was his form of prayer.

#### d. Love of Music

The gaucho's love of music and his spiritual relation to the mystic pampa are clearly defined characteristics of his poetry as later illustrations will show. His music was his joy and his solace. He made his guitar suit his mood and never did he feel really alone when, under the shade of the majestic ombú which was his inspiration as well as his protection from the rays of a scorching summer sun, he spoke through his instrument, sometimes it was a wordless song palpitating with life and feeling through the pampa air, or again, his spirit sought words to accompany the vibrant notes, and he improvised soulful words most of which, unfortunately, because of the very spontaneity of their composition, have been lost to posterity.

<sup>1</sup>Martín Fierro: José Hernández: Canto IX: stanza 10



Martin Pierno says:

Así me hallo una noche  
Contemplando las estrellas  
Que se parecen mas bellas  
Cuando uno es mas desgraciado.  
Y que Dios las haya creado  
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Las tiene el hombre carino  
Y siempre con alegría  
Ve salir las tres mujeres;  
Que se llueve, cuando escampa  
Las estrellas son la gula  
Que tiene el gaucho en la pampa.

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## 11. Disappearance of the Type

But when the European immigrant came to plough the desert wastes into fertile farms of waving grain, and long lines of railroad and telegraph poles marked the path of progress, then did the great pampa which had cradled him lose its mystic appeal to the gaucho soul, and with his inspiration gone and his free life hampered by the restrictions of civilization, he disappeared from country life as a picturesque figure, and his improvised songs no longer mingled their notes with the desert air.

So we have seen the gaucho as he was in real life and as he has come down to us in the literature which directly or indirectly was due to his inspiration.

### B. The Gaucho Literature

#### 1. General Divisions

The "Arte Gauchesco", as it is called by Argentine writers, is a literature developed as is any national literature, though in a shorter time than most, from the oral folklore, by gradual steps to the cultured modern types.

It first took the traditional form of the dances where only a laconic phrase now and then, gave it words. The recounting of myths and legends went on contemporaneously and simple romances of this type were common. From the oral themes, transmitted from generation to generation, there came the written folklore of the country people and their life. This in turn passed from the country to the city, where its



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vitality and interest were in time recognized and adopted into cultured types, and the gaucho and pampa life were the inspiration for many a work far afield from the simple verse of the payador. Comedy, tragedy, novel and oration, as well as all types of verse, historical and literary criticism, and even oratory itself borrowed from the folklore in a nationwide movement sponsored by some of the best writers. Variety of treatment, of language, of literary form, show the diversity of the development ranging from almost direct imitation to complete idealization, but in all there is a unity of spirit and general theme, with the pampa and the gaucho either in the foreground or the background.

## 2. End of the Movement

As a literary movement the development of this type of writing was ended before the close of the nineteenth century, for no longer could the cultured author seek direct inspiration in the limitless pampa and the representative of its atmosphere, the gaucho, for the pampa was divided into farms and ranches, and the typical gaucho no longer existed.

Sporadically the subject will be used by writers, but the flavor of the soil required for literary art, can be given only by direct contact, and this can never again be, so that this chapter of Argentine literature is definitely closed.

Ernesto Morales: *El Sentimiento Popular en la Literatura Argentina.*

Ricardo Rojas: *Historia de la Literatura Argentina.*



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### 3. The Gaucho Poetry

#### a. Preservation of the Early Folklore

The period of oral folklore while it is the longest in point of years, yet may be passed over briefly, for although we know that there was a great body of verse, so little that is understandable has come down to us that it can be classified with the anonymous written poetry, for the differentiation is not easy to make. Paul Groussac, the late able librarian of the National Library at Buenos Aires, sponsored the collection and classification of the national verse, but so widespread was its existence that the work is not yet completed, although a great body of the original verse in that collection has already been utilized by folklore scholars.

#### b. The Sources Used in this Paper

This collection not being available for the present paper, representative types of verse have been chosen from books by five Argentine folklore scholars, and some of poetry is so well known or so typical as to be given by all five. For this reason the references will not be given separately.

These books and their authors are:

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### c. Value of the Anonymous Type

Although it has already been noted that all types of literature have adopted the gaucho theme, it is in the poetry, whether it be of the early original style or the cultured later poems, that there came the greater part of that which is most valuable and noteworthy.

The following paraphrase from Ricardo Rojas<sup>1</sup> analyzes well the qualities and value of the regional poetry.

Primitive they are in form and technique, but whether it be the ingenuous primitiveness of the folklore singers or the deliberate imperfections of the imitated forms, there is in all a certain simplicity of form and language, and a definite psychology of the characters themselves, of their deeds and of the atmosphere of their surroundings, as well as a rusticity in the technique of the verse, which characterize and catalogue this poetry as a type distinct from the cultured poetry of European mold being developed simultaneously in the Argentine cities.

Rojas goes on to say that these characteristics could not be a chance type, for the unity of spirit was through all, nor could it be the fruit of a passing political state nor the caprice of individuals, for it had deeper roots, in the soil, in the race, in the adapted language, and was in fact an integral part of the Argentine spirit, the first attempt at a national literary art which had its roots in the folklore,

<sup>1</sup> Historia de la Literatura Argentina: Vol. I: Introduction  
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### c. Value of the Anonymous Type



its trunk in Martín Fierro<sup>1</sup>, and its branches in all the modern literature of the type, and it is a type, national and regional, like the symbolic tree of Argentina, the solitary ombú of the pampa.

#### d. General Characteristics of the Early Poetry

The earliest of the poetry now extant owed its form and inspiration to the oral verse of past generations, which has passed to oblivion, and as both are anonymous, it is difficult to place chronologically any, except that which is occasional, belonging to some definite historical epoch.

The rustic language, the romantic meter, the guitar accompaniment for the lyric song or the epic story, the visualization of the pampa atmosphere, and the idealizing of country life and the gaucho interpreter, these were all more or less characteristic of the anonymous poetry, and they were also the definite contribution to the later poets who imitated well, though the language they used was not their own speech, the freshness and ingenuousness of the country verse.

#### e. Indian Influence

The early folklore in verse showed in certain regions a difference in the cadence and the rhythm due to the influence of the Indian dialects but in all, the dominant themes were religion, love and patriotism.

Much of the guaraní folklore of the regions near Paraguay has been preserved through translation of the

<sup>1</sup> Martín Fierro by José Hernández.



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Jesuits who lived among them and instructed them, and the themes and treatment differ little from the early gaucho verse.

#### f. Spanish Influence

It is fairly easy to distinguish the Indian influence on the early poetry, but the Spanish influence is far more subtle and, of course, more prevalent in all types, for the language and the guitar are the same in both.

Studying the origins of the gaucho forms there will be found in them a connection, and a similarity in rhyme and rhythm to the redondillas and rimas of various parts of Spain. The long popular development, however, has brought about so many changes in form and theme that the claim of originality is undeniable. Since the Spanish guitar continued as the favorite accompaniment, the poetry could not widely diverge from its original metrical forms, but it added to them and developed them with the originality of an entirely different environment.

The claim is frequently made by Spaniards of the direct descent of the gaucho vidalita from the Spanish petenera. While this may be true to a certain degree, the vidalita has a note of sadness and melancholy which mark it as Indian rather than Spanish, for it has the Indian lament frequently repeated, while the petenera is more joyful and, in fact, melancholy only at the sorrows of love.



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Some of the criollo songs and popular dances, like the guitar which incites to rhythmic movement, were originally imported from Spain, for the rhythm, and some of the dance figures are like the Andalusian. Some of the most characteristic, however, such as El Pericón and El Gato are distinctly pampa bred. Of this type we shall have illustrations later.

g. The Payador

Before taking up the types of poetry, we should consider the most picturesque and talented of the gaucho poets, the payador.<sup>1</sup>

1) In Person

The gaucho habit of improvising to suit his needs or his mood brought forth the professional cantor or payador who because of superior talent, gave himself up wholly to music and went from ranch to ranch singing and playing and improvising to suit the whims of his audience. The story of the visits of the pampa minstrel to the villages and ranches sounds like a tale from Europe in the Middle Ages rather than the eighteenth and early nineteenth century in the New World.

The payador's expressions were fertile in poetic figures and images, and he often prolonged the musical notes of his accompaniment to resemble the sigh of the pampero through the leaves of the ombú, and he thrilled his audience with the sheer artistry of his rustic music.

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Probable derivation of payador is from payo a name for a rustic or country man in old Castillian.



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## 2) The Payada

Such was the effect in the "payada" where the genius of two payadors was tested by skill and endurance, for in this poetic dialogue the audience was skilled in picking the wheat from the chaff, and declared defeated that contestant who, though he might be able to pour a torrent of words into the pampa air, yet had no gems of verse or soulful music to proclaim the simplicity and sincerity of his muse.

We shall later have more on this subject for the payada became a favorite with the cultured masters of this field of literature and in Martín Fierro, and the lyrics of Rafael Obligado, we find these contests.

## 3) Santos Vega

The arch type of the payador was Santos Vega who epitomized all payadors and who in life and death was an inspiration not only to the audience who knew and loved him but to others more erudite, who saw him as the personification of the mystery of the pampa, and through him were moved to create poetry that can never die.

### h. Common Types of Verse

Just as in Andalusia, the guitar was the usual accompaniment of the pampa dance, and the verse that developed to express the music was also sung either by the payador musician or by the dancers. The dance music was therefore the most common and also was used for patriotic themes.



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The best known types of verse and dance, some of which were regional merely, may be found today in the country when the villagers gather for a dance, although the more modern tango is the popular dance today.

The vidalita, cielito and chacarera are the most universally found, and therefore have been interpreted in more verses and with more variety. Other types which we shall illustrate briefly are the milonga, the gato, and the pericón, and the huella.

We shall follow the above order in illustrating the verses that are used with the guitar to give inspiration and enthusiasm to the dancers or to the audience.

#### 1) The Vidalita

The vidalita is a form of sonnet usually octosyllabic with a short refrain between the lines, and is, like the cielito, common in patriotic verse. It has an interesting dramatic action in the dance.

Both the gauchos who were enemies and those who were partisans of Rosas used this type in the Civil War. An anonymous enemy of Rosas sings:<sup>1</sup>

Religión, muerte,  
Vidalita,  
Dice tu pendón.  
Tu robas y matas,  
Vidalita,  
Y es tu religión.

A gaucho friend of the tyrant sings a similar song for the Federalist army.

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A gaucho friend of the tyrant sings a similar song for the Federalist army.



Perros unitarios,  
 Vidalitá,  
 Nada han respetado  
 A inmundos franceses,  
 Vidalitá  
 Ellos se han aliado.  
 Religión o muerte,  
 Vidalitá,  
 Dice tu pendón  
 Saques y matas  
 Vidalitá  
 Y es tu religión.

Ricardo Rojas gives illustrations of a vidalita used as erotic verse, a common form for this type.

El día que no te veo  
 Vidalitá  
 Para mí no sale el sol  
 Ni brillo tiene la luna  
 Vidalitá  
 Ni vida mi corazón.

and again

Unos ojos negros,  
 Vidalitá,  
 Me quitan la vida  
 Y me devuelven,  
 Vidalitá  
 Cuando ellos me miran.

Another more general in its eroticism and less pleasing to an Argentine maiden.

En tomando mate,  
 Vidalitá,  
 Bajo la enramada  
 Son las santigueñas,  
 Vidalitá,  
 Las mejor amadas.

Ricardo Rojas<sup>1</sup>, scorning the Spanish claim of the vidalita being a type of petenera, considers its melancholy tone when used with a love theme as proving its relationship with the guena of the Peruvian Indians or the plaintive yaraví of the



Personas unidas,  
Vidales,  
Nada han rescatado  
A inmundos franceses,  
Vidales  
Nada se han alado,  
Religion o muerte,  
Vidales,  
Dios en poder  
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Inca tribes.

## 2. The Cielito

### a) War Themes

The cielito, frequently sung in the pampa, came into writing about 1810, for when the educated soldier of the city mingled with the gaucho patriots he wrote down the verses which they recited, and sometimes he added some thought of his own. Love of country had not been a common theme up to this time for although songs of freedom had at times rung through the pampa air, the themes for the most part had been subjective. Now this popular form widened its scope and so profuse were the cielitos of the anonymous soldiers, some of which offered complete expositions of the need for independence while others celebrated or lamented over events of the war, that they would almost form, if tabulated chronologically, a rhythmic history of the war for independence.

There were the cielitos at the arrival of the Spanish expedition at the Rio de la Plata, songs of the exploits of the army in Bolivia, and of the army of San Martín in Chile. All of the songs are simple in form and thought, but with a genuineness of patriotic feeling mingled now and then with humor or subtle satire, that allow them to be classified as true poetry. Perhaps some of them have been purged of grammatical flaws by the scribes who have perpetuated them in writing.



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## 2. The Gladius

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generousness of patriotic feeling mingled now and then with humor or subtle satire. That allow them to be classified as

free poetry. Perhaps some of them have been purged of formalities by the scribes who have perpetuated them in

writing.



b) Illustrations of Cielitos

The patriot general Alvear is rather extravagantly lauded in the following cielito which is in typical eight syllable verse with the cielito refrain:

Viva nuestro general  
Y vivan todas sus tropas  
Que consiguieron rendir  
Toda la fuerza de Europa.  
Ay cielo, cielito, cielo,  
Cielo ahora han de callar  
Y andarán todos sin sombra  
Viendo al general Alvear.

The cielito of Maipú rather a long drawn out account of the events of that important battle of the revolution ends ingenuously in this way:

Viva el gobierno presente  
Que por su constancia y celo  
Ha hecho florecer la causa  
De nuestro native suelo.  
Cielito, cielo que sí  
Vivan las autoridades,  
Y también que viva yo  
Para cantar las verdades.

Two others short but graceful are the following:

Cielo, cielito, más cielo,  
Cielito siempre contad  
Que la alegría es del cielo  
Del cielo la libertad.

and

Cielito, cielito dichoso  
Cielo del Americano,  
Que el cielo hermoso del Sud  
Es cielo más estrellado.<sup>1</sup>

The following cielito shows the purpose of all of the cielitos which was to inspire the soldiers and improve their morale:

<sup>1</sup>This astronomical fact is very apparent to a northerner when he first observes the southern skies.



(b) Illustrations of Cielito

The patriot General Alvar is rather extravagantly  
lauded in the following cielito which is in typical eight  
syllable verse with the cielito refrain:

Viva nuestro General  
Y vivan todos sus tropas  
Que consigamos rendir  
Toda la fuerza de Europa.  
Ay cielito, cielito, cielito,  
Cielo ahora han de caer  
Y andarán todos sin temor  
Viendo al General Alvar.

The cielito of Malpá rather a long drawn out account of  
the events of that important battle of the revolution ends  
ingeniously in this way:

Vive el gobierno presente  
Que por su constancia y celo  
Ha hecho florecer la causa  
De nuestro native anilo.  
Cielito, cielito que al  
Viven las autoridades,  
Y también que vive yo  
Para cantar las verdades.

Two others short but graceful are the following:

Cielo, cielito-más cielito;  
Cielito siempre con tal  
Que la alegría es del cielito  
Del cielito la libertad.

and

Cielito, cielito dichoso  
Cielo del Americano,  
Que al cielito hermano del Sur  
Es cielito más estrellado.<sup>1</sup>

The following cielito shows the purpose of all of the  
cielitos which was to inspire the soldiers and improve their  
morale:

<sup>1</sup>This astronomical fact is very apparent to a northerner  
when he first observes the southern skies.



El cielito de la patria  
Hemos de cantar, paisanos  
Porque cantando el cielito  
Se inflama nuestro entusiasmo.

Henry Holmes<sup>1</sup> in his excellent anthology gives a very fine anonymous cielito which was written, as its name indicates "A la Venida de la expedición Española al Río de la Plata in 1819."

The first and last stanzas are quoted here.

No queremos españoles  
Que nos vengan a mandar,  
Tenemos Americanos  
Que nos sépan gobernar.  
Cielito, cielo que sí,  
Aquí no se les afloja,  
Y entre las bolas<sup>2</sup> y el lazo<sup>2</sup>,  
Amigo Fernando<sup>3</sup>, escoja.

The final stanza which shows complete understanding of the consequences of defeat is this:

Si perdiésemos la acción  
Ya sabemos nuestra suerte,  
Y pues juramos ser libres:  
¡ La Libertad o la muerte!  
Cielito, cielo que sí,  
A ellos y cerrar la espuela,  
Y al godo que se equiboque<sup>4</sup>  
Sumírselo hasta las muelas.

On studying the above illustrations it will seem almost obvious to the reader that a poet scribe must have corrected crudities of speech.

### 3) The Chacarera

The chacarera was a favorite dance on the pampa and had romantic "coplas" to give it words.

<sup>1</sup>Spanish America in Song and Story - Henry Holt & Co. 1932  
<sup>2</sup>Gauche weapons for coralling the cattle.  
<sup>3</sup>Ferdinand VII, King of Spain at that time.  
<sup>4</sup> Equivoque



El cielo de la patria  
 Hemos de cantar, palmas  
 Porque cantando el cielo  
 Se inflama nuestro entusiasmo.

Henry Holmes in his excellent anthology gives a very fine anonymous cielo which was written, as its name indicates "A la Venida de la expedición Española al Río de la Plata in 1819."

The first and last stanzas are quoted here.

No queramos españoles  
 Que nos vengán a mandar,  
 Tenemos Americanos  
 Que nos saben gobernar.  
 Cielito, cielo que así,  
 Aquí no se les ataja,  
 Y entre las hojas y el fajo,  
 Algo Fernando, sacaja.

The final stanza which shows complete understanding of

the consequences of defeat is this:

Si perdiésemos la acción  
 Ya sabemos nuestra suerte,  
 Y pues juramos ser libres:  
 La libertad o la muerte!  
 Cielito, cielo que así,  
 A ellos y cerrar la espuela,  
 Y al kodo que se equilibra  
 Jugárselo hasta las uñetas.

On studying the above illustrations it will seem almost obvious to the reader that a poet scribbler must have corrected crudités of speech.

### 3) The Chacarera

The chacarera was a favorite dance on the pampa and had romantic "coplas" to give it words.



The following verses are typical:

Cuando quiero, quiero mucho,  
 Cuando olvido, olvido luego,  
 Cuando me quieren dejar,  
 Antes que me dejen, dejo.

The sophistication of the above sentiment is in contrast to the sincere pathos of the following one:

Esta guitarra que toco  
 Tiene boca y sabe hablar,  
 Solo los ojos le faltan  
 Para ayudarme a llorar.

The following chacarera is of a different type for a merrier dance.

Chacarera, chacarera,  
 Chacarera de Ayacucho,  
 Te comiste los confites,  
 Me dejaste el cartucho.

#### 4) The Milonga

The milonga is a type of six or eight syllable verse which has been frequently copied by the later erudite writers as Rafael Obligado and José Hernández.

The payador who played and sang improvisations of his own in the more populous villages, and therefore had to possess more art and skill, was frequently called a milonguero.

An example of a milonga is that anonymous verse known to everybody in Argentina:

Santos Vega, el payador,  
 Aquel de la larga fama,  
 Murio cantando su amor  
 Como pájaro en la rama.



The following verses are typical:

Quando quitero, quitero mucho,  
Quando olvido, olvido luego,  
Quando me quieren dejar,  
Antes que me dejen, dejen.

The sophistication of the above sentiment is in contrast

to the sincere pathos of the following one:

Esta guitarra que tengo  
Tiene boca y sabe hablar,  
Solo los ojos le faltan  
Para agradecer a florar.

The following chacarera is of a different type for a

warrior dance.

Chacarera, chacarera,  
Chacarera de Ayacucho,  
Te comiste los conchitos,  
Me dejaste el carhucho.

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An example of a milonga is that anonymous verse known

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Santos Vega, el payador,  
Aquel de la larga fama,  
Murid cantando en amor  
Como bajano en la fama.



Another is:

De terciopelo negro  
Tengo cortinas  
Para enlutar mi cama  
Si tu me olvidas.

### 5) The Gato

The dance of El Gato varies in different provinces of Argentina, and in form, the verse to express it, is really the Spanish seguidilla.

En el mar de tu pelo  
Navega un peine,  
Y en las olitas que hace,  
Mi amor se duerme.

A cynical gaucho speaks in the following verse:

Las mujeres son zainas  
Como las mulas,  
Yo no digo por todas  
Digo por algunas.

and again in the same vein:

Yo no sé que le dije  
Que ella lloraba,  
Costumbre de mujeres,  
Llorar para nada.

A graceful bit of verse is the following with which to complete the illustration of the type:

Como la mariposa  
Tengo mi suerte,  
Aquello que más quiero  
Me da la muerte.

### 6) The Pericón

The pericón is a lighter happier dance, and the following mirthful dialogue, in which the lady is allowed the last word, is a type of verse common on the pampa and frequently is



Another is:

De terciopele negro  
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The dance of El Gato varies in different provinces of Argentina, and in form, the verse to express it, is really the Spanish sevillita.

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Las mujeres son zainas  
Como las mulas,  
Yo no digo por todas  
Digo por algunas.

and again in the same vein:

Yo no sé que se dije  
Que ella floraba,  
Costumbre de mujeres,  
Florar para nada.

A graceful bit of verse is the following with which to

complete the illustration of the type:

Como la mariposa  
Tengo mi suerte,  
Agujero que más duere  
Me da la muerte.

### 6) The Pericon

The pericon is a lighter happier dance, and the following  
witty dialogue, in which the lady is allowed the last word,  
is a type of verse common on the pampa and frequently is



accompanied by gestures in a sort of incipient drama.

El: Querer una no es ninguna,  
Querer dos es vanidad,  
El querer tres o cuatro  
Es gracia y habilidad.

Ella: Mocito de veinte amores  
Y conmigo veintiuna  
Si todas son como yo  
Se ha de quedar sin ninguna.

### 7) La Huella

There are many more dances with corresponding verses and music but as types of verse we shall conclude with "la huella". Many more illustrations of all of these types will be found later as we develop the themes of the gaucho verse.

A Don Juan of the Argentine desert sings:

Cúpido me pregunta  
Si sé de amores.  
Soy capaz de a Cúpido  
Darle lecciones.

A more gallant swain says as he dances:

De favores de damas  
Nunca blasones,  
Porque serás indigno  
De esos favores.  
A la huella, huella  
Dense las manos  
Como se dan la pluma  
Los escribanos.

#### 1. Poetic Themes

The verses already quoted show the metric structure in common use to interpret the pampa music and dance. A different selection will show the themes in which the bards of the great Argentine desert expressed their emotions, and



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### i. Poetic Themes

The verses already quoted show the metric structure in common use to interpret the pampa music and dance. A different selection will show the themes in which the bards of the Great Argentine desert expressed their emotions, and



their personality. It will be noted that for the most part they will be from the masculine viewpoint, for apparently the pampa bards were all men, and it may be noted here as well, that in all the "gauchesco" poetry either popular or the erudite, there is no really good characterization of a woman. The pampa was indeed a "man's world".

The theme of patriotism has already been developed in the types of verse so we may now look for the more subjective emotions--religious feeling, love of music and dancing, and all types of erotic emotion, happiness, philosophy, in fact every sentiment possible to this elemental man who was primitive in thought as in life but who in his verse "builded better than he knew".

#### 1) Religious Verse

Many times the gaucho felt his religion as a vague communion with an unseen power or again as a personal relationship. For that reason much of his poetry is vaguely religious without definite expression of belief. In the early days, however, when the missionary taught his religion to Indian and mestizo alike, Christ and the Virgin seemed really visualized as persons who might be in their midst.

An anonymous verse translated from the jargon in which it was produced shows naive simplicity of thought, and laconic expression, but it has a definite appeal to the heart.



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Un pobre anciano  
 Anda por esos caminos  
 ¿Será nuestro Señor?  
 ¡Es El!

Una pobre mujer  
 Anda por esos caminos  
 ¿Será la Virgen?  
 ¡Es Ella!

Sometimes there was a more orthodox type, of a liturgical quality not unlike our hymns:

En vuestra bondad me fundo,  
 Señor Dios, fuerte inmortal,  
 Que en el coro celestial  
 Cantare este himno profundo  
 Pues en los riesgos del mundo  
 Me cubriste en vuestro manto.  
 Dios uno y trino a quien tantos  
 Arcángeles, querubines  
 Angeles, serafines  
 Dicen Santo, Santo, Santo.

Just what part the clergy had to do with forming the religious verses is not known, for the missionaries, some of whom were real poets, kept their work anonymous.

Another type similar to Spanish songs but indigenous in development are Gozos al Niño Jesús or Villancicos sung at Christmas time. The following stanza is one frequently sung by the children of the pampa:

Al pesebre, al pesebre, mortales  
 Vamos hoy al pesebre a adorar  
 Lo mas dulce que tienen los Cielos,  
 De Jesús la divina beldad.

The definitely religious verse is not common in the vernacular as the hymns in ordinary use were not pampa inspired.



Un pobre esclavo  
 Anda por esos caminos  
 ¿Será nuestro Señor?  
 ¡Es Él!  
 Una pobre mujer  
 Anda por esos caminos  
 ¿Será la Virgen?  
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 Vamos hoy al pasaporte a adorar  
 Lo mas dulce que tienen los Cieles,  
 De Jesús la divina belleza.

The definitely religious verse is not common in the

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inspired.



## 2) Love of Music

The entire history of the gaucho productions forms the story of his love of music, but there are some typical bits of verse that well explain his productions.

Cuando agarro la guitarra  
Y la atravieso en mis brazos  
A mí ya se me parece  
Que se acaban los trabajos.

In the following verse he explains his improvised art:

No canto por tener ganas  
Ni por tener buena voz,  
Sino por echar afuera  
Las penas del corazón.  
Canta el río entre las piedras  
Y el gallo al amanecer,  
Ellos cantan porque saben  
Yo canto por aprender.

## 3) Light-heartedness

The theme of the joy of living is shown here by a light hearted gaucho who refuses to be serious:

Cantando me he de morir,  
Cantando me han de enterrar,  
Cantando me he de ir al cielo,  
Cantando cuenta he de dar.<sup>1</sup>

The gaucho greatly enjoys the dance, and urges each one to do his best in the following verse:

Cuatro pies tiene el gato,  
Cuatro la zorra,  
Cuatro la lagartija,  
Dos la paloma.  
Señoras bailarinas,  
Salgan a bailar  
No se hizo el baile  
Para conversar.

<sup>1</sup>Hernández has copied this thought in Martin Fierro. Canto I, Stanza 6.



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Cuatro la lagartija,  
Dos la paloma.  
Señoras bailarinas,  
Señoras bailarinas,  
No se hizo el baile  
Para convallar.



## 4) Philosophy

The gaucho sometimes uses his verse to offer a bit of his philosophy of life:

Con el cigarro de hoja  
 Comparo al mundo,  
 Que en él todo se vuelve  
 Ceniza y humo.

He is philosophical and cautious in the following verse:

Cúpido me dió un consejo  
 En el profundo del sueño,  
 Que nunca me apasionara  
 De prenda que tenga dueño.

and also in this is a comfortable philosophy:

Si me olvidas, te olvido,  
 Si me amas, te amo,  
 Si me dejas, te dejo,  
 Yo a todo me hago.

He passes on a bit of philosophy to the girl of the pampa to warn her against wearing her heart on her sleeve:

Cuando quieras a un hombre  
 Más que a tu vida,  
 Móstrate indiferente  
 Y serás querida  
 Porque los hombres  
 Cuando se ven queridos  
 ¡Caramba!  
 No corresponden.

His optimism shows in this verse with its metaphor of pampa life:

Vidita, no pierdo  
 La esperanza  
 Que en el pozo más hondo  
 La sogá alcanza.



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Con el cigarro de hoja  
Comparo al mundo.  
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En el profundo del sueño.  
Que nunca me apasionara  
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His optimism shows in this verse with its metaphor of

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Vidita, no pierdo  
La esperanza  
Que en el poyo más hondo  
La saga alcanza.



There is less obvious meaning in this:

Ninguno plante parras  
 Junto a un camino  
 Pasajeros que pasan  
 Cortan racimo.  
 Cortan racimo, sí.  
 Que quieres que haga  
 Tanto que te quiero  
 Tan mal me pagas.

The two following stanzas have figures from nature that are attractive:

Los dichos del hombre duran  
 Lo que las olas del mar,  
 La que nace pronto muere  
 Olas vienen y olas van.

and

La vida es como un arroyo  
 Que va a perderse en el mar,  
 Hoy cruza campo de flores,  
 Manana seco arenal.

##### 5) The Erotic Themes

The anonymous poet of the pampa sings most frequently of love because his solitary life had branded into his soul the melancholy of absence and the joyousness of hope and anticipation. Seldom did he touch his guitar to accompany complaints of the sufferings of the flesh; wounds, heat, sickness, were all endured with the stoic resignation of his Indian forbear and needed no solace from music and song. The joys and sorrows of the soul, however, could best be expressed by music and verse and so the theme of love is prolific in gaucho verse.



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Ninguno piante parra  
Junto a un camino  
Pasajeros que pasan  
Cortan racimo.  
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Hoy cruce campos flores,  
Mañana seco arena.

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## a) Lighter Love

After his return from long absences on the pampa where he was deprived of human companionship, the gaucho would throw himself heart and soul into the fiesta, and the dance, the music and the girl would inspire him to a frivolous song such as this:

Esa niña que baila  
Pañuelo de seda,  
No quiero tanto al pañuelo  
Como a la duena.

or again

A mal haya mi vida  
Fueses guitarra,  
Pa' tenerte en mis brazos  
Atravesada.

He believes in fair play, however, so he warns the lady not to take his extravagant words too seriously:

Mira, niña, que te quiero  
Y tu amor me anda gustando  
No te vayas a salir cierta  
Lo que te digo jugando.

and again he hints that with him, out of sight may be out of mind:

Los gauchos son cariñosos  
Cuando están en la reunión,  
Cuando ya se pasa el baile  
Ya se pasa la ilusión.

This gaucho rather boldly makes his announcement of the requirements for the girl of his heart:

Si quieres que yo te quiera  
Tres cosas has de tener  
Lindos ojos, linda boca  
Lindo modo de querer.



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Mira, niña, que te quiero  
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No te voyas a salir ciego  
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Tres cosas has de tener:  
Lindos ojos, linda boca  
Y un modo de querer.



## b) Passionate Love

There is an eloquent love story behind this little verse:

El verte me da la muerte,  
El no verte me da vida,  
Mas quiero morir y verte  
Que no verte y tener vida.

When the pampa gallant with his poncho thrown aside strums his guitar outside the lattice of his lady love's window, it is not difficult to visualize him as a true descendant of the romantic Andalusian who in like manner serenaded the maiden of his heart. To the light strains of his guitar, he fervently sings:

Ansiosos mis amores  
Como el arroyo,  
Van buscando dos lagos  
Que son tus ojos.

and again

Si me muero entérrame  
Junto a tu cama  
Que me sirvan dos luces  
Tus ojos, mi alma.

Below, two more on the same theme of bright eyes:

Ayer me ví en el cristal  
De esos tus ojos de cielo..  
¡Si en tu corazón me viera  
Como en tus ojos me veo!

and

Las estrellas del cielo  
Son ciento doce  
Con las dos de tu cara,  
Ciento catorce.



## b) Passionate Love

There is an eloquent love story behind this little verse:

El verte me da la muerte,  
 El no verte me da vida,  
 Mas quiero morir y verte  
 Que no verte y tener vida.

When the pampa gallant with his poncho thrown aside  
 strains his guitar outside the lattice of his lady love's  
 window, it is not difficult to visualize him as a true de-  
 scendant of the romantic Andalusian who in like manner sero-  
 naded the maiden of his heart. To the light strains of his  
 guitar, he fervently sings:

Andalucía mis amores  
 Como el arroyo,  
 Van buscando los lagos  
 Que son tus ojos.

and again

Si me muero enterrame  
 Junto a tu cama  
 Que me sirvan los lucas  
 Tus ojos, mi alma.

Below, two more on the same theme of bright eyes:

Ayer me vi en el cristal  
 De esos tus ojos de cielo.  
 Si en tus corazon me viera  
 Como en tus ojos me veol

and

Las estrellas del cielo  
 Son ciento doce  
 Con las dos de tu cara,  
 Ciento catorce.



To the curly locks of his "prenda" he sings thus:

Esos tus crespos cabellos  
Grillos y cadenas son,  
Con ellos me cautivaste  
Sangre de mi corazón.

One might think that this pampa lover had no work in life except to think of his love:

Todas las horas del día  
Las he repartido así  
Nueve contigo soñando  
Y quince pensando en tí.

### c) Constancy in Love

This theme is frequently developed in verse for although the gaucho may have many tries at love before experiencing his "grande passion" he will be firm and constant when he really loves, as he asserts here:

Nunca del amor se olvida  
Quien llega una vez a amar,  
Porque la vida es tan corta  
Que no hay tiempo de olvidar.

The following is a beautiful little quatrain:

La otra tarde, estando triste,  
Pité sin saber que hacer,  
Y me vino a la memoria  
La sombra de una mujer.

He again affirms his constancy thus:

A que el cielo me daría  
Tanto amor para quererte  
Si ahora para olvidarte  
Será preciso la muerte.

He reassures the girl who fears that he may forget her:

No pensés que por no verte  
Mi amor se ha desvanecido  
Yo soy un gaucho constante  
Y cuando quiero, no olvido.



To the early looks of his "prende" he sings thus:

Esos tus crespos cabellos  
Grillos y cadenas son,  
Con ellos me cautivaste  
Sancos de mi corazón.

One might think that this pampa lover had no work in

life except to think of his love:

Todas las horas del día  
Las he repartido así  
Nueve contigo sonando  
Y quince pensando en ti.

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Nunca del amor se olvida  
Quien llega una vez a amar,  
Porque la vida es tan corta  
Que no hay tiempo de olvidar.

The following is a beautiful little quatrain:

La otra tarde, estando triste,  
Falté sin saber que hacer,  
Y me vino a la memoria  
La sombra de una mujer.

He again affirms his constancy thus:

A que el cielo me daría  
Tanto amor para quererte  
Si ahora para olvidarte  
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He reassures the girl who fears that he may forget her:

No pienses que por no verte  
Mi amor se ha desvanecido  
Yo soy un gaucho constante  
Y cuando quiero, no olvido.



The above reassurance may have come as answer to verses of this sort:

Amor mío, si te vas  
Sola una cosa te pido  
Que no bebas de aquella agua  
De la fuente del olvido.

or

Si te vas una sola cosa  
Yo te encargo bien mío.  
Que no cumplas a otra  
Lo que a mí me has prometido.

The theme with an atmosphere of sadness is ever a recurring sentiment and it may be the melancholy which the Arab gave to the merry "Andaluz" or it may be, as in the northern plains especially, that the Indian, melancholy in temperament and saddened by his years of defeat and servitude, has given this seal of his blood to his conquerer.

Ricardo Freyre says:

A heritage thou gavest to the Spaniard,  
Of melancholy that no cure may know.<sup>1</sup>

The sadness of parting from his beloved, a frequent sorrow in a gaucho's life, is portrayed here:-

Llorando se despide,  
La vida mía,  
Porque no hay despedida  
con alegría.  
Es el amor, vidita.  
Como la sombra  
Que mientras más se aleja  
Más cuerpo toma.  
Vidita de mi vida,  
Así no más es,  
Amar es imposible  
Sin padecer.

<sup>1</sup> Translation of Alice Stone Blackwell: Some Spanish American Poetry: D. Appleton. 1929. p. 458



The above reassurance may have come as answer to verses

of this sort:

Amor mío, si te vas  
Sola una cosa te pido  
Que no dejes de aquella agua  
De la fuente del olvido.

or

Si te vas una cosa  
Yo te encargo bien mío.  
Que no cumulas a otra  
Lo que a mí me has prometido.

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Porque no hay despedida  
con alegría.  
Es el amor, vidita,  
Como la sombra  
Que mientras más se aleja  
Más cuerpo toma.  
Vidita de mi vida,  
A él no más es,  
Amor es imposible  
Sin dolor.

<sup>1</sup> Translation of Alice Stone Blackwell: Some Spanish American Poetry: D. Appleton. 1922. p. 458



The bitterness of unrequited love is shown here:

No tan solo es asesino  
El que nos clava un puñal  
Olvidar al hombre que ama  
También es asesinar.

and in the following mournful plaint:-

Adiós, que me voy llorando  
Me voy llorando y te dijo  
Si no me has sabido amar  
Con la esperanza me alejo.  
Ay sí, sí, Ay no, no  
Por otro me has olvidado  
Malhaya tu corazón.

He recognizes his weakness here:-

Allá va mi corazón  
Dirigido en un papel  
Llorando gotas de sangre  
Por una ingrata mujer.

In a general pessimistic vein the gaucho says:

Mis dichas y mis desdichas  
Son cual las olas del mar  
Mis desdichas las que se vienen  
Mis dichas las que se van.<sup>1</sup>

#### j) Conclusion of the Anonymous

These selections, although not in dialect common to many, are typical of the great body of verse left unnoted in this paper, and suggest the simple beauty and sincere feeling in the anonymous songs which are the folklore of Argentina, born, nurtured and preserved in the great pampa, and bequeathed to the nation, as a heritage no less valuable than the treasures of material wealth which the pampa has also bestowed.

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<sup>1</sup> Practically all of these anonymous verses may be found in Ernesto Morales': "El sentimiento popular en la literatura argentina": pp. 70-85. See also notes p. 34 this paper.



The bitterness of unrequited love is shown here:

No tan solo es asesino  
El que nos olvida en un papel  
Olvidar al hombre que ama  
También es asesinar.

and in the following mournful plaint:-

Adios, que me voy llorando  
Me voy llorando y te digo  
Si no me has sabido amar  
Con la esperanza me alejo.  
Ay si, ay, no, ay, no,  
Por otro me has olvidado  
Maldigo tu corazón.

He recognizes his weakness here:-

Allá va mi corazón  
Dirigiéndose en un papel  
Llorando gotas de sangre  
Por una ingrata mujer.

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Practically all of these anonymous verses may be found in  
"El sentimiento popular en la literatura  
Argentina": pp. 70-85. See also notes p. 54 this paper.



The names that are known and admired among the cultured writers of pampa inspiration, are outstanding monuments to some great single achievement, but the greater host of singers who have built up both content and spirit will forever remain unknown. The fame of a few has been built on the firm foundation laid by the soldiers of the desert, and as the tomb of the "Unknown Soldier" is today the Mecca for patriots in Europe and America, and reverence that brings tears to the eyes is felt by all at these hallowed spots, so the unknown soldier of the pampa, whether he fought the battles of peace or of war has left in his simple poetry an imperishable monument which appeals to the hearts of his countrymen, a monument of which, however, he himself laid but the foundations, wholly unconscious of the grandeur with which the later artists would complete his task.

### C. The Cultured "Gauchescos"

#### 1. Their Imitated Rusticity

In distinction from the gaucho poets, those anonymous authors of simple verses used for dance or song, the Argentinians call "gauchescos" those cultured masters of the literary art who although versed in formal education felt kinship with the simple folk of the pampa and taking over their language, their thoughts, their customs, and their versifications built up literature of such value that its worth is unquestionable.

These cultured men, who had breathed deep of the "pampero",



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## G. The Cultured "Gancheros"

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In distinction from the gaucho poets, these anonymous authors of simple verses used for dance or song, the Argentinians call "gancheros" these cultured masters of the literary art who although versed in formal education felt kinship with the simple folk of the pampa and taking over their language, their thoughts, their customs, and their verbal fictions built up literature of such value that its worth is unquestionable.

These cultured men, who had breathed deep of the "pampas",



brought their literature, with all its intentional crudeness of thought or form, to the big cities, thus becoming payadors to the city folks who hitherto had looked askance at the rural verse.

## 2. The Mutual Debt

There is a mutual debt between these cultured writers and their anonymous predecessors, for the latter would, like the gaucho himself, have passed to oblivion if it were not for the genius of the former, who in turn, could not have attained the excellence which they did, were it not for the inspiration derived from the work of the generations that had gone before.

The chief distinction between the "gauchescos" and other cultured writers not so classed who used gaucho themes, is the "gauchesco" direct imitation in language and verse of the pampa bards, whereas the others observed all the forms of good Castillian literature.

## 3. The Most Important Names

The outstanding names of the "gauchescos" are Bartolomé Hidalgo, Juan Godoy, Hilario Ascásubi, Estanislao del Campo, and José Hernández.

We shall now consider the contribution of these men to the strictly national literature only, for their other productions are not in the scope of this paper.



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We shall now consider the contribution of these men to the strictly national literature only, for their other productions are not in the scope of this paper.



a. Bartolomé Hidalgo (1788-1822 or 23)

### 1) Close Imitation of Pampa Bards

Bartolomé Hidalgo the pioneer in the "gauchesco" poetry was born in Montevideo in 1788 but lived later in Buenos Aires. He was the nominal founder of the "payador school", but much of his early fame was vicarious, for the clever poetry attributed to him was not wholly his own, as he adapted and arranged the oral verse of the anonymous gaucho bards who at the English invasion and the War for Independence improvised verse to celebrate the events, and also sang for this poet of the city, the rude verses of the plains.

The popular dialect, the romantic meter, the guitar, the lyric song and the epic story, all with a pampa atmosphere, these were the characteristics taken over by Hidalgo and sometimes he polished and gave to the world some of the real gaucho verse.

Therefore, his poetry forms a sort of borderline between the anonymous productions, and those of known authorship closely copying the others.

### 2. Works

#### a. Types

Hidalgo like his predecessors of the country used for the most part eight syllable verses. He had especial success in his cielitos, close copies of the country verse, which he made popular in the city when he returned after the war. His



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2. Works

a. Types

Hidalgo like his predecessors of the country used for the most part eight syllable verses. He had especial success in his elefante, close copies of the country verse, which he made popular in the city when he returned after the war. His



most valuable contributions, however, were his three Diálogos Patrióticos, for in these dialogues, not unlike some of the earlier ones of the country, he gives us the sincere convincing complaints of the gauchos who had helped to wrest the country from the power of Spain but who see freedom as far away as ever.

The gaucho Jacinto Chano, the overseer of a cattle ranch, discusses political events and other timely themes with his friend Ramón Contreras, who is pessimistic in regard to any advantages really gained by the years of struggle.

He says that the poor are still poor and the rich are still rich, as far as he can see, and the advantages are still with the moneyed class.

b) Quotations

The following excerpt at the opening of the dialogue shows the simplicity of form and thought:

Contreras: ¿Y cómo fué desde el día  
Que estuvimos platicando?

Chano: Con salud; pero sin yerba  
Desensille su caballo  
Tienda el áspero, y descanse.  
Toma este pingo, Mariano,  
Y con el bayo amarillo  
Camina y acollarálo.<sup>1</sup>

Later when they are discussing events, Contreras says:

Pues yo siempre oí decir  
Que ante la ley era yo  
Igual que todos los hombres.

<sup>1</sup> Morales, Ernesto: El sentimiento popular. p. 61



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#### b) Quotations

The following excerpt at the opening of the dialogue

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Contreras: ¿Y cómo fue desde el día  
Que estuvimos platicando?

Chano: Con salud; pero sin veros  
Desembarillo en caballo  
Tienda el hábito, y descanse.  
Toma este pingo, Mariano,  
Y con el payo amarillo  
Camina y acórralo.

Later when they are discussing events, Contreras says:

Pues yo siempre al decir  
Que ante la ley era yo  
Igual que todos los hombres.



Chano explains that it may theoretically be so, but

hay sus dificultades,  
En cuanto a la ejecución.<sup>1</sup>

He goes on to explain the difference in treatment of a poor gaucho who had got into difficulties with the law and a senorón who had been guilty of a more serious offence.

Chano says:

Y ¿esto se llama igualdad?

However, he goes on to say that he still hopes for a reformation and that some day soon --

que seremos hombres libres,  
y gozaremos el don  
más precioso de la tierra  
Americana, unión.<sup>1</sup>

Hildago wrote for the theatre other gaucho "sainetes" which were timely and witty. Jacinto and Ramón were his best characters, and their raciness delighted the audiences, especially in "La Relación que hace el gaucho Contreras a Jacinto Chano de todo lo que vió en las fiestas mayas de Buenos Aires" in 1822. In spite of its clumsy title this is full of timely wit which appealed to the cultured city folks.

We see the work of Hidalgo, then, as a sort of preface to the work of the later era when the city finally accepted from the country, its gift of sincere literary wealth.

<sup>1</sup> Morales, Ernesto: El sentimiento popular. p. 61



It is explained that it is not theoretically or even

any one individual,  
but rather a collection.

It goes on to explain the difference in treatment of a  
person who has not yet been fully identified with the law and  
a person who has been fully identified with the law.

It is said:

It is not a law, is it?

However, he goes on to say that he still hopes for a

reformation and that some day soon

and various business firms,  
Y. M. C. A. and other  
organizations of the  
American Union.

It is said that for the future other "reformation"

which were timely and with... Jackson and others were his

best character, and their presence delighted the audience.

especially in "La Religion des Peuples" and "La Religion des Peuples"

La Religion des Peuples is one of the best of the French people.

It is said that in 1882, the spirit of the French people

is still of the French people, and the French people

is still of the French people, and the French people

is still of the French people, and the French people

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b. Juan Godoy (1793-1864)

Juan Gualberto Godoy really preceded Hidalgo in his imitation of the popular verse and the vernacular but his influence at the time was local for he kept a store (pulpería) on the pampa and sold to local would-be payadors his clever verses which they sang as their own.

1) His Value

Domingo Sarmiento (hijo) said of him:

Don Juan Godoy was the first who attempted in the republic the meters of the payadors, making verses notable, not only for their sweetness of melody and the feeling with which they are impregnated, but also for the pungent satire with which, in the genuine form of the gaucho cantor, they attack vices and social irregularities.<sup>1</sup>

Godoy was exiled by Rosas and lived in Chile where he wrote, with true feeling, of his youth in the free atmosphere of the pampa which he loved:

O cuan bella es la llanura  
De la amada patria mía.<sup>2</sup>

His first book El Corro, which antedated Hidalgo's work, is also a dialogue in which a gaucho gives a friend who lives on the pampa a picturesque description of the battle of Salta.

Bartolomé Mitre says that the pathetic payador, Santos Vega, was personally known to Godoy who probably, however, idealized him in his poetry, so that he became, to the credulous people of the plains, the typical singer of the pampa who knew how to speak to the hearts of the country folk. Godoy as a cultured singer of the vernacular had the direct

<sup>1</sup>Translated from *El sentimiento popular en la literatura argentina.* p. 160

<sup>2</sup>Quoted by Ricardo Rojas: *Op. cit.* Page 4 Chap. XV



D. Juan Godoy (1783-1864)

Juan Guadalupe Godoy really preceded Hidalgo in his imitation of the popular verse and the vernacular but his influence at the time was local for he kept a store (pulperia) on the pampa and sold to local would-be payadors his clever verses which they sang as their own.

1) His Value

Domingo Sarmiento (1810) said of him:

For Juan Godoy was the first who attempted in the republic the meters of the payadors, making verses notable, not only for their sweetness of melody and the feeling with which they are impregnated, but also for the pungent satire with which, in the genuine form of the gaucho cantor, they attack vices and social irregularities.

Godoy was exiled by Rosas and lived in Chile where he wrote, with true feeling, of his youth in the free atmosphere of the pampa which he loved:

O cuan bella es la llanura  
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His first book El Gaucho, which antedated Hidalgo's work, is also a dialogue in which a gaucho gives a friend who lives on the pampa a picturesque description of the battle of Salta. Bartolome Mitre says that the pathetic payador, Santos Vega, was personally known to Godoy who probably, however, idealized him in his poetry, so that he became, to the credulous people of the plains, the typical singer of the pampa who knew how to speak to the hearts of the country folk. Godoy as a cultured singer of the vernacular had the direct



insight and personal knowledge of the pampa inhabitants which made his work inimitable by those who had not his personal touch. Ernesto Morales cites the following verses to show Godoy's genuine feeling of the pampa payador. A storm is approaching.

Cruzan el vuelo ligero  
De patos pardos bandadas,  
Del chajo y el teruterero  
Se oye el grito plañidero  
En voces desentonadas.

Brama el toro en modo extraño  
Da el potro roncós bufidos  
Mientras el manso rebaño  
Anuncia inminente dano.<sup>1</sup>  
En lastimosos balidos.<sup>1</sup>

Godoy might perhaps have become the most famous of the "gauchescos" but he moved to Chile, then to Lima, and there he forsook the gaucho type of verse and wrote mediocre poetry in the approved cultured style.

#### c. Hilario Ascásubi (1807-1875)

##### 1. Life

The realistic form of dialogue and the pampa dialect used by Hidalgo and Godoy was also used by Hilario Ascásubi who even more faithfully and artistically than they, reconstructed the grandeur of the pampa and the realistic scenes of every day life there.

Ascásubi was born and brought up in pampa atmosphere and although a city education became his, his heart and soul were ever with his gaucho friends. He became a soldier in

<sup>1</sup> E. Morales: El sentimiento popular: p. 61



insight and personal knowledge of the pampa inhabitants which made his work inimitable by those who had not his personal touch. Ernesto Morales cites the following verses to show Godoy's genuine feeling of the pampa payador. A storm is approaching.

Quedan al viento ligero  
De patos pardos bandadas,  
Del chajá y el terrero  
Se oye el grito piazadero  
En voces desentonadas.

Trama el toro en modo extraño  
De el potrero rosas bulidos  
Mientras el manco robano  
Anuncia lamento dando  
En lastimosos bulidos.

Godoy might perhaps have become the most famous of the "gauchescos" but he moved to Chile, then to Lima, and there he forsook the gaucho type of verse and wrote mediocre poetry in the approved cultured style.

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Ascasubi was born and brought up in pampa atmosphere and although a city education became his, his heart and soul were ever with his gaucho friends. He became a soldier in



the army opposed to Rosas, and later a colonel on the "unitarian" side. After peace had come, he was sent to Paris by President Mitre as the representative of the government, and he held other government positions as well. Cultured gentleman that he was, with a genius sufficient for any type of writing, he chose to be the colorist and spokesman of his beloved native plains.

Ascásubi as a political opponent of Rosas was imprisoned and condemned to death. He escaped, however, by letting himself down from his window into the prison moat, and then fled to Montevideo where were gathered many of the intellectual "emigrados" banished by Rosas. Here he joined the army opposed to Rosas, and no small part of his importance at this time was the skill of his pen to appeal in the popular dialect to the soldiers opposed to the gaucho tyrant.

## 2) His Works

### a) His Writings against Rosas

When Rosas to strengthen his hold on the people of the country published pamphlets in the gaucho dialect with poetry and political news, the "emigrados" in Montevideo responded to his tactics by evoking the aid of the powerful pen of Ascásubi, and the periodicals of the time published cielitos and diatribes against Rosas and his policies, in fact a completely successful campaign literature in the vernacular, in which Ascásubi, as a master of the art, knew well how to appeal to the gaucho heart.



the army opposed to Rosas, and later a colonel on the "unitarian" side. After peace had come, he was sent to Paris by President Mitre as the representative of the government, and he held other government positions as well. Cultured gentleman that he was, with a genius sufficient for any type of writing, he chose to be the colorist and spokesman of his beloved native plains.

Ascañudi as a political opponent of Rosas was imprisoned and condemned to death. He escaped, however, by letting himself down from his window into the prison moat, and then fled to Montevideo where were gathered many of the intellectual "emigrados" banished by Rosas. Here he joined the army opposed to Rosas, and no small part of his importance at this time was the skill of his pen to appeal in the popular dialect to the soldiers opposed to the gaucho tyrant.

## 2. His Works

### a) His Writings against Rosas

When Rosas to strengthen his hold on the people of the country published pamphlets in the gaucho dialect with poetry and political news, the "emigrados" in Montevideo responded to his tactics by evoking the aid of the powerful pen of Ascañudi, and the periodicals of the time published articles and distributed against Rosas and his policies, in fact a completely successful campaign literature in the vernacular, in which Ascañudi, as a master of the art, knew well how to appeal to the gaucho heart.



The following cielito used in the dance might well have been written by an anonymous gaucho of earlier days:

Cielito, cielo y más cielo.  
Cielito y la despedida,  
Muera Rosas y seremos  
Libres por toda la vida.<sup>1</sup>

Another poem Media Cana del Campo was written to the tempo of a dance of that name, and had sentiments intended to inspire the soldiers to bring about a defeat of Rosas like that of Cagancho, and thus end his supremacy. One of the favorite devices of Ascásubi was to write in letter form against Rosas. Favorite letters in the army were those supposed to be written by the gaucho Donato Juras to his wife, describing the acts of cruelty of Rosas and his Masjorca.<sup>2</sup> As the writer was an enemy of Rosas, there was undoubtedly great exaggeration, but they do serve to give to history one side of the great civil struggle.

His favorite meter was assonanted verse of ten syllables, and even today it is still sung to the music of the guitar although the passions that brought forth much of it have long since been burnt out.

#### b) His Important Writings

His important writings hitherto only in periodicals were gathered together by the author when he was in Paris in 1873 and three volumes were the result and it is on these that his fame rests. These volumes were Paulino Lucero and verses against Rosas, Aniceto el Gallo and trovos against Urquiza,

<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup>E. Morales: El sentimiento popular: p. 41

A company of secret service men known and hated for their atrocities.



The following cancion used in the dance might well have

been written by an anonymous gauchito of earlier days:

Cancion, cancion y mas cancion.  
Cancion y la despedida.  
Muere Rosas y serenos  
Libres por toda la vida. 1

Another poem Medio Canto del Canto was written to the tempo of a dance of that name, and had sentiments intended to inspire the soldiers to bring about a defeat of Rosas like that of Cagancho, and thus end his supremacy. One of the favorite devices of Ascanio was to write in latter form against Rosas. Favorite letters in the army were those supposed to be written by the gauchito Donato Juarez to his wife, describing the acts of cruelty of Rosas and his forces. As the writer was an enemy of Rosas, there was undoubtedly great exaggeration, but they do serve to give to history one side of the great civil struggle.

His favorite meter was resonant verse of ten syllables, and even today it is still sung to the music of the guitar although the passions that brought forth much of it have long since been burnt out.

#### R) His Important Writings

His important writings hitherto only in periodicals were gathered together by the author when he was in Paris in 1873 and three volumes were the result and it is on these that his fame rests. These volumes were Paulino Lucero and verses against Rosas, Anticipo al Gallo and rhymes against Urquiza.

1  
2 E. Merales: El sentimiento popular: p. 41  
A company of secret service men known and hated for their atrocities.



and the masterpiece of the three, Santos Vega.

(a) Paulino Lucero

The full title of Paulino Lucero including the rather cumbersome but elucidating subtitle is: "Paulino Lucero or the Gauchos of the Río de la Plata singing and fighting against the tyrants of the Argentine and Oriental Republics 1839-51."

In the letters which form the collection there will be found an almost complete relation of all the episodes of the nine years' siege which Montevideo "heroically" sustained against the tyrant, as well as the other combats which the gauchos of the "unitarian" army fought until Rosas was defeated. This book is valuable for its portrayal of the local customs as well as for the historical events which must be taken "with a grain of salt" because of the partisan origin of its satire.

In one of the poetic dialogues of Paulino Lucero there is the description of the anniversary in 1833 of the signing of the Constitution in Montevideo. Paulino in his naive manner describes the dress of the ladies and the various events of the festivities where much drinking seems the order of the day. A few lines serve to show the style.

He notes here a habit not characteristic of gauchos:

Y sabiendo mi afición  
A echar un trago.

and in the following explains the gaucho love for a fight:



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He notes here a habit not characteristic of Gauchos:

Y asiendo mi afición  
A echar un trago.

and in the following explains the gaucho love for a fight:



Bien que los gauchos patriotas  
 Peleamos por afición,  
 Y en cuanto se arma una guerra  
 Sin mas averiguación  
 De si es regular o injusto,  
 Nos prendemos el latón  
 Y dejando las familias  
 A la clemencia de Dios  
 Andamos años enteros.<sup>1</sup>

Another poetic bit shows the equality of citizens in a republic but it has a satirical quality for the rest of the poem goes on to show that it is an equality more honored in the breach than in the observance:

Yo aunque soy un pobre gaucha  
 Me creo igual al mejor,  
 Porque la ley de la Patria  
 Como las leyes de Dios  
 No establece distinciones  
 Entre el que usa chiripá  
 O el que gasta casacón  
 Todos los hombres iguales  
 Ante la justicia son.<sup>1</sup>

When pitied by a friend for a bullet wound which he has received the gaucho fatalism shows:

¿Pobre yo? Le respondí,  
 No, amigo, usted se equivoca;  
 A cada hombre al fin le toca,  
 Y ahora me ha tocado a mí.<sup>1</sup>

#### (b) Aniceto el Gallo

After the fall of Rosas, Ascásubi began in Buenos Aires the publication of a periodical entitled Aniceto el Gallo where he showed that he had adopted federalist doctrines instead of advocating complete centralizing of political controls as was the unitarian policy.

El Gallo, probably rather for its sentiments and politi-



Andamos años enteros.  
A la clemencia de Dios  
Y dejando las familias  
Nos preñamos el latón  
De al es regular o injusto.  
Sin mas averiguación  
Y en cuanto se arma una guerra  
Palasmos por acción,  
Bien que los ganchos patriotas

Another poetic bit shows the equality of citizens in a republic but it has a satirical quality for the rest of the poem goes on to show that it is an equality more honored in the breach than in the observance:

Ante la justicia son.  
Todos los hombres iguales  
O el que gasta cascabel  
Entre el que usa oblique  
No establece distinciones  
Como las leyes de Dios  
Porque la ley de la Patria  
Me crea igual al mejor,  
Yo aunque soy un pobre ganchero

When pitted by a friend for a bullet wound which he has received the ganchero fatalism shows:

¿Pobre yo? La respuesta  
No, amigo, más es equívoca;  
A cada hombre el fin le toca,  
Y ahora me ha tocado a mí.

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cal sidelights than for any intrinsic merit, had a great popularity in Buenos Aires and was widely imitated in style by other writers. Most of these imitations, however, are of little value except Anastasio el Pollo of Estanislao del Campo of which we shall treat later.<sup>1</sup>

Ascásubi achieved no lasting fame for his work, however, for the gaucho conversations were on policies of interest only at the moment - contemporary events of no great importance, and the language was such as to require a glossary and so does not make especially interesting reading now that the partisan passions which inspired it, and this is true of its predecessor also, no longer have any place in the Argentine Republic now definitely become a federal republic.

(c) Santos Vega

(1) Interest of the Author in Pampa Life

Ascásubi had been, up to the time that he composed Santos Vega, the talented satirist whose main interest was of a political nature. When, however, there was an end to the political strife, to the literature of which he had contributed valuably and profusely, this pampa born literary artist sought means to realize an ambition that had long been his, - to present in complete form the social structure of the pampa. The title which he gave to this novelistic poem was Santos Vega o Los Mellizos de la Flor a double title in which the poetic and the prosaic mingled. This poem was

<sup>1</sup>

See page 67



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evolved not only to satisfy his own longing but also in an attempt to revivify by a longer poem of conscious art, the fast decaying spirit of the popular poetry.

## (2) The Story and Method of Treatment

In Santos Vega, one of the three outstanding poems of the "gauchesco" period the famous payador "aquel de la larga fama" relates the life and lawless deeds of a famous gaucho outlaw who lived about 1778-1808. The poem is in dialogue form, Santos telling the story and Rufo Toloso serving as a sort of interlocutor, and in this way it is not unlike the author's earlier works or those of Hidalgo. In this poem, however, he is the artist as well as the "raconteur" and while the story loses force by lacking real argument and by being at times too long drawn out, yet it presents a series of word pictures of the pampa, a dramatic account of Indian raids and a realistic description of life on the "estancia" such as could come only from the pen of one wholly versed in country life.

Santos Vega really lived as a flesh and blood payador who went from ranch to ranch, invincible in his power to speak to the people through his music and his song. He was, however, idealized in his picturesque personality and really became a synthesis of all payadors, a glowing type, representative of the spirit of the national poetry personified in him.

The Santos Vega of Ascásubi sings to the music of his



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The Santos Vega of Ascanubi sings to the music of his



guitar what he heard and saw in the pampa, and while so doing he is the payador just as the pampa folks visualized him, the gaucho, not sublimated but of flesh and blood, who had capacity for love, for patriotism and for valiant deeds and yet who was a sort of symbolic being, the personification not only of the payador but also of the mystic pampa with a weirdness of beauty suggested in its sighing breeze.

All this and more was the Santos Vega of Ascásubi and his poem brought together all the mythological doings of the famous bard and gathered into one vital synthetic personality the thoughts and deeds of a hundred pampa bards. By the form of writing which he adopted, that of relating the deeds instead of performing them in the poem, Ascásubi lost the vitality which might have made his poem take precedence over Martín Fierro as the national epic, for the title and the atmosphere had a popular appeal, old yet ever new. We shall hear more of Santos Vega in the beautiful lyrics of Rafael Obligado.

### (3) Excerpts from the Poem

The following quotations from Santos Vega allow us to see the beauty of the realistic descriptions so different from the excerpts from Paulino Lucero.

In the descriptions of the ranch La Flor which figures in the title there is the characteristic setting of the ombú, the symbolic tree of the pampa, which is indeed ageless for



guitar what he heard and saw in the pampa, and while so doing he is the payador, just as the pampa folks visualized him, the gaucho not sublimated but of flesh and blood, who had capacity for love, for patriotism and for valiant deeds and yet who was a sort of symbolic being, the personification not only of the payador but also of the mystic pampa with a weirdness of beauty suggested in its sighing breeze.

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In the descriptions of the ranch La Flor which figures in the title there is the characteristic setting of the ombu, the symbolic tree of the pampa, which is indeed a place for



no one has ever seen an ombú destroyed by anything except the woodman's axe. A thousand years may be its life of majesty and beauty for it needs neither sun nor water, nor the kindness of the elements to perpetuate its leafy glory.

This is the ombú of the estancia "La Flor":

Coronaba aquella loma,  
referida en lo anterior,  
un ombú, del cual decían  
hombres más viejos que yo,  
que más de cien primaveras  
florido reverdecio  
desafiando tempestades,  
con altiva presunción,<sup>1</sup>

In the following the author graphically describes an Indian attack:

Entonces los ovejeros  
Coliando bravos torear  
Y tambien revoltean  
Gritando los teruteros,  
Pero esos si, los primeros  
Que anuncian la novedá  
Con toda seguridad  
Cuando los Indios avanzan,  
Son los chajases que lanzan  
Volando: chajá: Chajá!<sup>2</sup>

d. Estanislao del Campo (1834-1880)

#### 1) His Early Writings

The writer in gaucho dialect and verse who so well copied Ascásubi that many thought that the verses were his, was Estanislao del Campo who continued with Anastasio el Pollo as a series of papers. Del Campo was not a man of country life but was a national deputy prominent in public affairs, who, however, presented in his best work, Fausto, a gaucho poem which ranks in popularity in Spain and the rest of Spanish

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Henry A. Holmes: Spanish America in Song and Story. p. 14

2 E. Morales: El sentimiento popular: p. 64



no one has ever seen an ombú destroyed by anything except the woodman's axe. A thousand years may be the life of majesty and beauty for it needs neither sun nor water, nor the kindness of the elements to perpetuate its leafy glory. This is the ombú of the estancia "La Flor":

Coronada aguililla blanca,  
reflejada en lo anterior,  
un ombú, del cual descan  
hombres más viejos que yo,  
que más de cien primavera  
florida reverdecido  
desaliando tempestades  
con silva presunción,

In the following the author graphically describes an

Indian attack:

Entonces los overos  
Golando bracos torcen  
Y cambian revoltes  
Grifando los torques,  
Pero esos al, los primeros  
Que amulan la novela  
Con toda seguridad  
Cuando los indios, avascan,  
Son los chatacos que janan  
Volando: chata: chata:

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America next to Martín Fierro.

One of del Campo's early poems which had success was an account in gaucho style of the battle of Pavón where Mitre overcame Urquiza, successor to Rosas. His short poems called Acentos de mi Guitarra, written also in payador fashion, are beautiful bits of verse.

## 2) Fausto

Fausto is the work which places del Campo in the same class with Ascásubi and Hernández. Its title is "Fausto: Impresiones del Gaucho Anastasio el Pollo en la representación de esta opera." In this masterpiece of its author, Anastasio el Pollo retells to his friend Laguna the story of Gounod's Faust in his own gaucho dialect, and his reactions, and his friend's, graphically portray the terrible effect of the tragedy on the simple gaucho mind. The narrative in six cantos proceeds directly and realistically, and the quaint humor and over credulous simplicity, at times almost stupidity, make enjoyable reading, so that its popularity was immediate.

The poem describes the meeting of the two Gauchos with the simple details of the meeting such as offering each other tobacco and gin, as was the country custom. They praise their horses and tell of the poverty as a result of the war. Then in an offhand manner el Pollo tells of his visit to the capital, where by chance he followed the crowd to the Colón theatre and saw Gounod's Faust. As the story proceeds we



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get interesting bits of gaucho philosophy and suggestions of their ideas on love, family honor, sorrow, death, all the emotions in fact that could be called forth by that tragic opera. Its drawback, however, and this is what in the opinion of most critics keeps it from being the true type of "gauchesco" poetry, is that it almost burlesques the gaucho for his simplicity and gullibility, and thus is not a true interpretation of the real gaucho of the pampa. Its exaggeration, however, in no way impairs its excellence as a composition, for its perfection of form proclaims it the work of an erudite author consciously artistic and pleasingly simple.

The setting of the poem is in the solitude of the great mysterious pampa, where the image of Mephistopheles and his dark deeds presented in vivid portrayal, seem to permeate the very atmosphere and inspire terror in the hearts of the simple countrymen by the very realism which they themselves evoke.

The ingenuousness of the speakers, as well as the type of dialect may be seen in the following excerpt where Faust and Mephistopheles are making their bargain, and the latter says:

Anastasio: "Aquí estoy a su mandao  
Cuenta con un servidor."  
Le dijo el diablo al doctor  
Que estaba medio asonsao.  
"No quiero plata ni mando."  
Dijo Don Fausto: "yo quiero  
El corazón todo entero  
De quien me tiene pensando."



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says:

Anastasio: "Apud entoy a un mandao  
 Guante con un servidor."  
 Le dijo el diablo al doctor  
 Que estaba medio asonao.  
 "No quiero plata ni mando."  
 Dijo Don Faust: "yo quiero  
 El corazón todo entero  
 De quien me tiene perando."



No bien esto el Diablo oyó,  
Soltó una risa tan fiera  
Que toda la noche entera  
En mis orejas sonó.  
Dió en el suelo una patada  
Una pared se partió  
Y el Dotor, fullo, miró  
A sorpresa idolatrada

Laguna: ¡Canejo! Será la verdad?  
Sabe que se me hace cuento?

Anastasio: No crea que yo le miento  
Lo ha visto media ciudá.

Next comes an admiring description of Margarita, and then Mephistopheles says to Faust:

Anastasio: Si quiere, hagamos un pato:  
Uste su alma me ha de dar,  
Y en todo lo he de ayudar,  
¿Le parece bien el trato?  
Como el Dotor consintió,  
El Diablo sacó un papel  
Y el hizo firmar en él  
Cuanto la gana le dió.<sup>1</sup>

The introduction is of a different type of poetry with great descriptive beauty: -

El sol ya se iba poniendo,  
La claridad se ahuye toda,  
Y la noche se acercaba,  
Su negro poncho teniendo,  
Ya las estrellas brillantes  
Una por una salían  
Y los montes parecían  
Batallones de gigantes.<sup>1</sup>

E. José Hernández (1834-1894)

Three outstanding poets of the gauchesco types there were: Ascásubi, Del Campo and the greatest of all José Hernández "El último payador."

<sup>1</sup> Henry Holmes: Spanish America in Song and Story: p. 26-27



Hernández "El último payador."

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Three outstanding poets of the gaucho type there

E. José Hernández (1834-1884)

Batallones de gigantes.  
Y los montes parecían  
Una por una salían  
Ya las estrellas brillantes  
En negro poncho tendido,  
Y la noche se acercaba,  
La claridad se ahuyaba,  
El sol ya se iba poniendo.

great descriptive beauty:

The introduction is of a different type of poetry with

Anastasio: El diablo, hagamos un pacto:  
Únase en alma me he de dar,  
Y en todo lo he de ayudar,  
Así parece bien el trato?  
Como el doctor consultó,  
El diablo sacó un papel  
Y el hizo firmar en él.  
Cuanto la gana le dió.

then Mephistopheles says to Faust:

Next comes an admiring description of Margarita, and

Anastasio: No eres que yo le miento  
Lo he visto media ciudad.

Laguna: ¿Ganajo? Será la verdad?  
Sabe que se me hace cuento?

A su prenda idolatrada  
Y el doctor, fullo, miró  
Una pared se partió  
Dio en el suelo una patada  
En mis orejas sonó.  
Que toda la noche entera  
Soló una risa tan fiera  
No bien esto el diablo oyó.



### 1) His Pampa Life

José Hernández was born on a ranch not far from Buenos Aires. It was there that he spent his adventurous youth and became imbued with the spirit of nature in its wild state, and grew to love so well the life of freedom on his native plains that, when later he was filling important positions of state--he was secretary of the treasury, a member of the Board of Education, and attorney for the provincial courts--his thoughts turned to the life of his youth, and the gaucho homes and hearts that held ever a welcome for him, and he was inspired to write the epic which gave deathless fame to its author and to the gallant but fast disappearing race of the pampa of his youth.

### 2) Martín Fierro

#### a) The Author's Love for the Gaucho

Other works he wrote, but Martín Fierro is the only one which will be known to posterity for into it he put himself, that part of his virile youth which had loved and absorbed the songs of the pampa bards and had known and loved the gaucho.

He affirms this in Martín Fierro:

Yo he conoçide esta tierra  
En que el paisano vivía  
Y su ranchia tenía  
Y sus hijos y mujer  
Era una delicia al ver  
Como pasaba sus días.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>

Martín Fierro: Part one Canto II Stanza 4



## 1) His Pampa Life

José Hernández was born on a ranch not far from Buenos

Aires. It was there that he spent his adventurous youth and became imbued with the spirit of nature in its wild state, and grew to love so well the life of freedom on his native plains that, when later he was filling important positions of state--he was secretary of the treasury, a member of the Board of Education, and attorney for the provincial courts--his thoughts turned to the life of his youth, and the gaucho homes and hearts that held ever a welcome for him, and he was inspired to write the epic which gave deathless fame to its author and to the gallant but fast disappearing race of the pampa of his youth.

## 2) Martín Fierro

## a) The Author's Love for the Gaucho

Other works he wrote, but Martín Fierro is the only one which will be known to posterity for into it he put himself, that part of his virile youth which had loved and absorbed the songs of the pampa birds and had known and loved the gaucho.

He affirms this in Martín Fierro:

Yo he conocido esta tierra  
En que el paisano vivía  
Y su ranchito tenía  
Y sus hijos y mujer  
Era una delicia al ver  
Como pasaba sus días.



Y verlos al caer la tarde,  
 En la cocina reunidos,  
 Con el juego bien prendido  
 Y mil cosas que contar,  
 Platicar muy divertidos,  
 Hasta después de cenar.<sup>1</sup>

#### b) Verse Form

The poem is written for the most part like the older gaucho poetry in octosyllabic verse, with six line stanzas, but at times there are varieties, some called forth by the theme or others intentional imperfections of verse or rhyme to make the poem more nearly resemble that which it imitated, the cruder type of the earlier poetry.

Ricardo Rojas says that in his poem Hernández has gathered all the elements of pampa life and the art of the payadors, and in lyric form, traditional verse and perfect rhyme, and any exigency of meter which the subject required--grave or gay, quick or slow,--has given us the proverbs, the bits of superstition, the anecdotes, the customs, and the Indian and gaucho passions, which constitute a veritable collection of folklore in one epic poem.

#### c) Debts to the Past

Ernesto Morales thus describes the evolution of the poem:<sup>2</sup>

Martín Fierro is one of those poems only possible when a vast literature of the same type has gone before, creating the atmosphere and the figures. It is a synthesis. Without the anonymous singers, without Hidalgo and Ascásubi who prepared the way, it could not have been written. And it appeared as a sort of "swan song" at the time

<sup>1</sup>

Martín Fierro: Part one Canto II Stanza 14

<sup>2</sup>El sentimiento popular Trans. from pp. 92-93



Y verlos al caer la tarde,  
En la cocina reunidos,  
Con el fuego bien prendido  
Y al coque que coque,  
Platicar muy divertidos  
Hasta después de cenar.<sup>1</sup>

#### b) Verso Form

The poem is written for the most part like the older gaucho poetry in octosyllabic verse, with six line stanzas, but at times there are variations, some called forth by the theme or other intentional imperfections of verse or rhyme to make the poem more nearly resemble that which it imitated, the cruder type of the earlier poetry.

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when the gaucho was about to disappear, engulfed in the new life of the pampa. In place of civil war, or war against the Indians, peace and the industry foreign to the older gaucho prevailed. The immigrant, each day more numerous, was conquering everything with his prolific plough. It was then that Martín Fierro rose, sang, and left behind him the irradicable footprints of a heroic race whose virtues, however, were no longer fitted for the new civilization.

One might say that in this poem the gaucho type went down in a blaze of glory and nothing more on the subject needed to be said because now all had been said. As Martín Fierro declared:

Pues nadie ha de cantar  
Cuando este gaucho cantó.

There is still another quotation to show its reputation outside the country, that may well be given before studying the narrative and other details of the poem.

Miguel Unamuno links this poem with what has gone before in Spanish lyric verse as well:

Martín Fierro is deeply Spanish. When the payador of the pampa in the shadow of the ombú, in the infinite calm of the desert, or in the serene night under the light of the stars, entones, accompanied by his guitar, the monotonous 'decimas' of Martín Fierro, and the gauchos listen moved with the poetry of the pampa, they will feel without knowing it or being able to explain it, that there comes to them unconsciously from the spirit, inextinguishable echoes of mother Spain, echoes which with their blood and their spirit, their fathers bequeathed to them. Martín Fierro is the song of the Spanish warrior, who after having planted the cross in Granada went to America to serve in the vanguard of civilization and to open a path in the desert! 1



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Menéndez y Pelayo says:

The master work of the gauchesco type is by almost unanimous confession of the Argentines the poem of José Hernández, Martín Fierro.<sup>1</sup>

This famous poem by José Hernández was first published in 1872 in thirteen cantos. In response to public demand the author in 1878 published the second part, longer, (thirty-three cantos) and less spontaneous, which he named La Vuelta de Martín Fierro.

E) Narrative

(1) Part One: La Ida

The narrative itself is simple, for the greatness of the poem lies in other qualities, though a unity of content important in sustaining interest is developed by the series of events in the life of the protagonist.

Martín Fierro, a gaucho of honorable descent, has a prosperous ranch, a comfortable house and a growing family to whom he is a good father. Without warning he is torn from them by the military authorities and sent as a conscript to fight against the Indians who are menacing the border. He receives the promise of good food and shelter, fair pay and a service of six months only. These promises, however, are not kept, and hungry and desperate, he deserts after three years of suffering and privation. He makes his way back to his ranch but-



Memorandum Y. Salazar says:

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It is a narrative

The narrative itself is a whole, for the progression of the poem lies in other qualities, though a unity of content is constant in sustaining interest is developed by the series of events in the life of the protagonist.

Martín Fierro, a grandson of honorable descent, has a prosperous ranch, a comfortable house and a growing family to whom he is a good father. Without warning he is torn from them by the military authorities and sent as a conscript to fight against the Indians who are menacing the border. He receives the promise of good food and shelter, fair pay and a service of six months only. These promises, however, are not kept, and hungry and desperate, he deserts after three years of suffering and privation. He makes his way back to his ranch but



No hallé ni rastro del rancho  
Solo estaba la tapera.<sup>1</sup>

From a neighbor he learns that his belongings have been sold for taxes and rent, his children have been scattered to work as peons on different ranches, and his wife has gone away with--

no sé que gabilán<sup>2</sup>

His lament as a father and husband is a touching bit of poetry in which he offers excuses for his wife's delinquency and vilifies the authorities who are the cause of his sorrows. This is one of the most popular parts of the poem among the lower class, for he is, in his verse, their mouthpiece in crying out against a social injustice that really existed, and they feel his wrongs as their own.

His troubles, however, are only begun for he has to fight against a contingent that pursues him as an army deserter, and he is forced to kill in self-defence.

He is now an outlaw, doubly pursued by civil and military authorities. He has an encounter with the police, and with the help of Cruz, his gaucho companion in later wanderings, he comes out best. This again is a favorite description for the men gathered to listen to the reading in a "pulpería" of the pampa.

Fierro now decides to break completely with the civilization which has so illtreated him, and he and Cruz, with

<sup>1</sup> Martín Fierro: Canto VI Stanza 14  
<sup>2</sup> *ibid.* Stanza 21



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His troubles, however, are only begun for he has to  
fight against a contingent that pursues him as an enemy  
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He is now an outlaw, doggedly pursued by civil and military  
authorities. He has an encounter with the police, and with  
the help of Cruz, his rancho companion in later wanderings,  
he comes out best. This again is a favorite description  
for the men gathered to listen to the reading in a "pulpería"  
of the pampa.  
Pietro now decides to break completely with the civili-  
zation which has so ill-treated him, and he and Cruz, with



whom he has formed a beautiful friendship, flee to the Indian settlements.

The fourth stanza from the end is this:

Y pronto sin ser sentidos  
 Por la frontera cruzaron,  
 Y cuando la había pasado,  
 Le dijo Cruz que mirara  
 Las últimas poblaciones,  
 Y a Fierro dos lagrimones  
 Le rodaron por la cara.<sup>1</sup>

This first part which voiced the spontaneous desire of the author's heart is superior to the later work. The descriptions are vigorous and realistic in the fighting and the gauchos joyously applaud when it is read or recited. Wit, strength, forcefulness, kindness--these are the characteristics of that composite gaucho, Martin Fierro, and his pampa audience laugh and weep with him as if it were a stage production.

#### Part Two: La Vuelta

The second part tells of Fierro's life among the Indians to whom he has fled with Cruz, then of the pathetic death of Cruz in an epidemic. Then comes a realistic description of a fierce battle with an Indian whom he kills to save a white woman. Because of this, he is forced once more to flight and decides to return to civilization. He again meets his children who are half grown, and he also finds Picardía, the rather tricky son of Cruz, to whom he relates the story of his father's death.

<sup>1</sup>

Martín Fierro: Canto XIII: Stanza 26



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The fourth stanza from the end is this:

Y pronto sin ser sentidos  
Por la frontera cruzaron,  
Y cuando la noche pasado  
Le dijo Cruz que mirara  
Las últimas poblaciones,  
Y a Pietero dos lagrimas  
Le rodaron por la cara.

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This meeting, although vivid at times in descriptions and comments, is rather long drawn out for each one tells the entire story of his life and adventures.

The most interesting figure here is the old gaucho Vizcacho whose bits of wit and wisdom provide a pleasing variety.

To make his poem fulfill all the requirements of a perfect gaucho production, Hernández introduces a "payada" between Fierro and a negro, which is a masterpiece of its kind.

The poem closes rather abruptly with some sound advice which Fierro gives to his sons and to Picardía. The explanation sometimes offered for the abrupt conclusion is that Hernández was planning a third part which his death, not long after, prevented.

#### f) Popularity

The popularity of the book was instant among the lower classes, and between 1872 and 1875, forty thousand copies were sold in Buenos Aires and there were nine editions in Rosario. It became the favorite reading whether of a gathering of villagers at a ranch or pulpería, or at a gathering in the drawing rooms of the wealthy, thereby showing the universality of its appeal.



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Hernández foretold this appeal to different types of readers when Martín Fierro said:

Hernández El campo es del ignorante  
El pueblo del hombre estruido,  
Yo que en el campo he nacido,  
Digo que mis cantos son,  
Para los unos-sonidos  
Y para los otros-intención.<sup>1</sup>

and challenged criticism thus:

Yo he conocido cantores  
Que era un gusto el escuchar  
Mas no querían opinar.  
Y se divierten cantando,  
Pero yo canto opinando  
Que es mi modo de cantar.<sup>2</sup>

Hernández himself had faith in the eventual success of his poem as is shown in the last canto:

Ellos guardarán úfanos  
En su corazón mi historia:  
Me tendrán en la memoria  
Para siempre mis paisanos.<sup>3</sup>

#### g) Reason for Success

The signal success of Hernández had a threefold basis:-  
he was a real poet, sensitive to sound and to rhythm, and perfect in technique; he was also sincere in his sentiments for he loved the pampa and its inhabitants and had keen and sympathetic insight into the workings of the gaucho mind; and lastly, he consciously built on the great foundation already laid, not only by his illustrious predecessors, but by the hundreds of nameless payadors who had left a goodly heritage

<sup>1</sup> Martín Fierro: La Vuelta. Canto I. Stanza 10  
<sup>2</sup> ibid Canto I. Stanza 11  
<sup>3</sup> ibid Canto XXXIII. Stanza 17



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1 Martín Pizarro: La Vuelta. Canto I. Stanzas 10  
2 Ibid. Canto I. Stanzas 11  
3 Ibid. Canto XXXIII. Stanzas IV



to this last scion of their noble race.

#### h) Excerpts

Hernández sang through the mouth of this creature of his heart, the love of music that was his in common with all payadors. His opening stanza is this:

Aquí me pongo a cantar  
Al compás de la viguela  
Que el hombre que lo desvela  
Una pena extraordinaria,  
Como la ave solitaria,  
Con el cantar se consuela.<sup>1</sup>

and again

Con la guitarra en la mano  
Ni las moscas se me arriman.<sup>2</sup>

and

Porque recibí en mí mismo  
Con el agua de bautismo  
La facultad para el canto.<sup>3</sup>

and also

El amor como la guerra  
Lo hace el criollo cantando.<sup>4</sup>

It would make an interesting study indeed to follow in Martín Fierro all the sentiments of the gaucho heart-- love, religion, tenderness, gallantry, for all these and more have beautiful expression in the poem, but the subject would be a thesis in itself.

Before closing with this masterpiece of Hernández, well called the epic of Argentina, there are two stanzas

1

2 Martín Fierro:

1bid

3 1bid

4 1bid

Canto I: Stanza 1

Canto I: Stanza 10

Canto I: Stanza 4

Canto XIII: Stanza 21



to this last action of their noble race.

h) Excerpta

Hernandez sang through the mouth of this creature of his heart, the love of music that was his in common with all payadors. His opening stanza is this:

¡Ay! me pongo a cantar  
Al compás de la vigüela  
Que el hombre que lo desvela  
Una pena extraordinaria,  
Como la ave solitaria,  
Con el cantar se consuela.

and again

Con la guitarra en la mano  
Mi las moscas se me arriman.

and

Porque raschi en mi mismo  
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and also

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1	Stanza I	Canto I	Martin Fierro:
2	Stanza 10	Canto I	Ida
3	Stanza 4	Canto I	Ida
4	Stanza 21	Canto XIII	Ida



that I should like to quote as different from the bits of verse already given.

One is from the payada between Fierro and the negro when the latter says:

Bajo la frente más negra  
Hay pensamiento y hay vida.  
La gente escuche tranquila  
No me haga ningún reproche,  
También es negra la noche  
Y tiene estrellas que brillan.<sup>1</sup>

and this stanza which is typical of the best:

Dios formó lindas las flores  
Delicadas como son,  
Les dió toda perfección  
Y cuanto él era capaz  
Pero al hombre le dió más  
Cuando le dió corazón.<sup>2</sup>

#### 4. Conclusion of this Type

There might be many more names added to those already mentioned, for after the early masters had shown the way by breaking down the disdain of the cultured reading public for anything of country origin, the imitation of the gaucho forms became general among the city writers whose eyes were opened by the tremendous success of Hernández. So much of this work, however, was lacking in sincerity and realism that it found little favor with a discriminating public.

The writers of whom this paper has given an account were the outstanding figures, and among their work we find the three great "gauchesco" productions, differing in type,

<sup>1</sup>

Martin Fierro: Canto XXX. Stanza 22

<sup>2</sup> *ibid* Canto XIII. Stanza 3



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Dice feroz, lindas las flores  
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Les dio toda perfección  
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but "racy of the soil" true in every way to the atmosphere which directly inspired them, for only direct inspiration could have produced Santos Vega, Fausto and Martín Fierro.

D. The Gaucho Theme in Literary Productions.

We have now come to the last portion of our theme the extension into all forms of cultured literature of the gaucho protagonist, or the pampa atmosphere and environment. This is a theme that might be long drawn out, for although direct inspiration may now be lacking, there is still a glamour from the past that appeals to writer and audience, and the end is not in sight.

The distinction of this topic and the preceding is not one of time, for Hernández was much later chronologically than Echeverría. The two types in fact developed at the same time, but one took the form and language of the payadors, and the others used the form and language of cultured Spain.

1. Poetry

a. Esteban Echeverría (1805-1851)

1) The Doctrine of Echeverría

The master of this school of literature, if such it can be called, was Esteban Echeverría who promulgated the cultivation of criollism in literature and this was later called the "doctrine of Echeverría." His doctrine may best be expressed in his own words in the preface of



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#### I. Poetry

##### a. Esteban Echeverria (1805-1851)

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his finest work:

The desert is our richest patrimony and we ought to take from its breast not only wealth for our aggrandizement and well being, but also poetry for our moral pleasure and the encouragement of our literature.<sup>1</sup>

Thus did he try to stem the flood of the European tide which would have made Argentine literature a servile copy of the productions of France and Spain.

Echeverría may well be called one of the erudite writers of Argentina for when twenty years of age he went to Europe to complete his education, the study of literature being his chief desire. He became an adherent of the Romantic School and was a great admirer of Goethe, Shakespeare, and also of Byron, for whom he had a personal friendship.

## 2) His Writings

He went back to Argentina in 1830 and began to write poetry, not that of the erudite art of Europe as might be expected from a youth just returned from abroad, but on subjects of his native land using, however, all the poetic artistry that he had acquired, and especially the romantic and melancholy tone of Byron which was thereafter a deliberate mannerism with him.

### a) First Poetry

Elvira o La Novia de la Plata published in 1832 received little attention partly on account of the political troubles, and little recognition came to him for any of his works until

<sup>1</sup> Coester: Literary History of South America: p. 109



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Los Consuelos, a few years later, which had immediate popularity. To better work out his own theory of literary content from national sources he moved to the pampa to get away from the uninspiring city and here some of his best work was done.

b) La Cautiva

The most notable work which belongs to the theme of this paper was published in 1837 in a book entitled Las Rimas. In the most valuable poem of the book "La Cautiva" he utilized his own theory by having the complete setting in the Argentine pampa and treating it in an elevated and classic manner. La Cautiva is the first national work of any writer which embodied in cultured poetic form the romance and the grandeur of the pampa.

(1) Theme

The theme of the story is, in the mind of Echeverría, subservient to the development of the glory of the pampa, but he recognized the added interest of the human touch and so placed in his story two idealized human beings who loved each other with an undying affection.

It is the story of the raiding of a village by the Indians and the kidnapping of María and her husband Brian who is condemned to die to torture for his activities against the Indians. As the story unfolds Echeverría paints the vastness and majesty of the pampa and its poetic mystic atmosphere.



Los Conquistadores, a few years later, which had immediate popularity. To better work out his own theory of literary content from national sources he moved to the pampa to get away from the mining city and here some of his best work was done.

#### b) La Cautiva

The most notable work which belongs to the theme of this paper was published in 1837 in a book entitled Las Rimas. In the most valuable poem of the book "La Cautiva" he utilized his own theory by having the complete setting in the Argentine pampa and treating it in an elevated and classic manner. La Cautiva is the first national work of any writer which embodied in cultured poetic form the romance and the grandeur of the pampa.

#### (1) Theme

The theme of the story is, in the mind of Rheverria, subservient to the development of the glory of the pampa, but he recognized the added interest of the human touch and so placed in his story two idealized human beings who loved each other with an undying affection.

It is the story of the raiding of a village by the Indians and the kidnapping of Maria and her husband Brian who is condemned to die to torture for his activities against the Indians. As the story unfolds Rheverria paints the vastness and majesty of the pampa and its poetic mystic atmosphere.



While the Indians are asleep after a drunken orgy, María kills the chief and some of his men, frees her husband from his bonds, and together they flee from the camp. In the meantime a band of rescuers have arrived, but after extensive search, they are forced to start back having found no trace of the captives. The devoted couple suffer terrible hardships and finally Brian dies of fever in spite of heroic efforts to save him on the part of María. María, alone, with thoughts of her dead husband and her child who had been murdered by the Indians, begins to lose her mind, and when at last she is found by some soldiers, it is too late, for, calling out in delirium for her husband and son, she too dies.

The development of the poem is not unlike some parts of the Santos Vega of Ascásubi which had not yet been written. Dawn and evening on the pampa have an especial appeal to both but Echeverría has the consciously added culture of the city writer which adds a literary technique that the imitator of the payador lacks. The poem is considered by the Argentines, and by other critics as well, as a master work in theme and development.

Yo que en la tierra he nacido  
 Donde ese genio he cantado,  
 Y el pampero he respirado  
 Que el payador he nutrido,  
 Bese este suelo querido



While the Indians are asleep after a drunken orgy, Maria kills the chief and some of his men, frees her husband from his bonds, and together they flee from the camp. In the meantime a band of rescuers have arrived, but after extensive search, they are forced to start back having found no trace of the captives. The devoted couple suffer terrible hardships and finally Brian dies of fever in spite of heroic efforts to save him on the part of Maria. Maria, alone, with thoughts of her dead husband and her child who had been murdered by the Indians, begins to lose her mind, and when at last she is found by some soldiers, it is too late, for, calling out in delirium for her husband and son, she too dies.

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## (2) Excerpts

Here is a bit of the pampa description which shows the erudite author rather than the simplicity of the payador type:

Se puso el sol; parecía  
Que el vasto horizonte ardía  
La silenciosa llanura  
Fué quedando más oscura  
Más pardo el cielo, y en él  
Con luz trémula brillaba  
Una que otra estrella, y luego  
A los ojos se ocultaba  
Como vacilante fuego.<sup>1</sup>  
El soberbio chapitel.

The eight syllable verse is his favorite.

Another bit of lyric beauty is this:

¿Qué pincel podrá pintarlas  
Sin deslucir su belleza?  
¿Qué lengua humana alabarlas?  
Solo el genio su grandeza  
Puede sentir y admirar.<sup>1</sup>

## (3) Tribute of Rafael Obligado

Echeverría's proclamation of faith in the intrinsic beauty and interest that can be given to Argentine poetry by native themes won many ardent followers, Rafael Obligado among others, and he perhaps best expressed this "credo" which is known by every country youth from early school days. It is a tribute to the master.

Yo que en la tierra he nacido  
Donde ese genio ha cantado,  
Y el pampero he respirado  
Que el payador ha nutrido,  
Beso este suelo querido



## (2) Excerpta

Here is a bit of the same description which shows the  
erudite author rather than the simplicity of the popular type:

Se puso el sol; parecía  
Que el vasto horizonte ardía  
La atenciosa lluvia  
Fue cubriendo más oscura  
Más pardo el cielo, y en él  
Con las tremulas brisas  
Una que otra estrella, y luego  
A los ojos se ocultaba  
Como vacillante fuego.  
El soporoso charnel.

The eight syllable verse is his favorite.

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It is a tribute to the master.

Yo que en la tierra he nacido  
Donde ese genio ha nacido,  
Y el pampero me respaldado  
Que el payador me nutrido,  
Bebo este anhelo querido



Que a mis caricias se entrega,  
Mientras de orgullo me anaga,  
La convicción de que es mía  
;La patria de Echeverría,  
La tierra de Santos Vega!<sup>1</sup>

b. Juan María Gutiérrez (1809-1878)

Gutiérrez was one of that distinguished group of Argentine men of letters who were forced, after imprisonment, into exile in Montevideo. Like many of the others, he used his facile pen against Rosas while expatriated, and wrote some very good political verse. He was a friend of Echeverría's, and followed with enthusiasm his ideals in regard to the Americanization of literary themes.

1) Los Amores del Payador

In 1838, about a year after the publication of "La Cautiva", Gutiérrez wrote "Los Amores del Payador" a long poem which put the gaucho into verse in delightful cultured poetry. Los Amores is a typical gaucho legend without, however, the simplicity of form or the popular language of the earlier type. It is full of poetic feeling and real artistry, dramatic in theme and development and pure in diction. In spite of the rather elevated tone and involved style, it truly portrays the pampa atmosphere though not wholly from the gaucho point of view.

<sup>1</sup>

Alice Stone Blackwell: Some Spanish American Poets.  
D. Appleton & Co. New York 1929: p. 353



Que a mis caricias se entregó,  
Mientras de orgullo me abregó,  
La convicción de que es mía  
La patria de Boves y de  
La tierra de Santos Vega!

D. Juan María Gutiérrez (1809-1878)

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Cayeron derribados  
 Celos y orgullo a un tiempo; y en el pomo  
 Del puñal justiciero que clavado  
 Quedó en la garganta el ganadero.  
 Reflejaba la luz de aquella estrella  
 Que acompaña al crepúsculo. Los ojos  
 Del triste vencedor eran atraídos,  
 Como rayo al imán, de aquel siniestro  
 Fulgor compuesto de una luz del cielo  
 Y del metal dorado de este mundo.<sup>1</sup>

c. Bartolomé Mitre (1821-1906)

A man of whom Argentina may well be proud as a virile son is Bartolomé Mitre, editor, poet, soldier and statesman.

1) His Career

At the age of sixteen Mitre was already known as a soldier and a poet. At twenty seven, while in exile in Chile during the Rosas regime, he was on the staff of El Mercurio of Valparaíso, a position which afforded him opportunity to write vigorously against the tyrant. He commanded the artillery for the army that defeated Rosas at Monte Caseros in 1852, and after holding other public offices, he was president of Argentina from 1862-68. In 1869 he founded La Nación, a newspaper which today is influential and of excellent standard.

Besides his editorial work, Mitre was a prolific writer but it is only his gaucho writings that we are to consider here.

In 1854, when gaucho writing was coming into vogue, Mitre voiced his literary beliefs, in the introduction to

<sup>1</sup>

From J. M. Rohde: Las estéticas en la literatura argentina  
 Vol. I: p. 196



Y del metal dorado de este mundo.  
 Fugir conmovido de una luz del cielo  
 Como rayo al instante, después sin retorno  
 Del triste vencedor eran arrojados,  
 Que acompañaba al crepúsculo. Los ojos  
 Reflejaba la luz de aquella estrella  
 Quedaba en la garganta el gorgoleo.  
 Del punal justiciero que elevaba  
 Celos y orgullo a un tiempo; y en el poema  
 Cayeron derribados

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the second edition of his gaucho poems. It is different from the doctrine of Echeverría yet involves some of the same results.

## 2) His Literary Theory

He said:

"Primitive customs have had many singers but almost all have limited themselves to copying them instead of giving them a poetic character. So it is that in order to make gauchos talk, the poets have used all the gaucho idioms thus raising a jargon to the rank of poetry. Poetry is not the servile copy but the poetic interpretation of nature."<sup>1</sup>

In this paragraph are suggested the two parallel lines along which the indigenous poetry of Argentina ran--the one type as in Mitre, Echeverría and later Obligado, and the other as in Ascásubi and Hernández.

## 3) His Gaucho Writings

In some of his best work Mitre was a disciple of Echeverría, and found inspiration in the pampa and the national customs. El Ombú en medio de la Pampa is a beautiful eulogy of that mysterious and ageless tree.

He is also the first to bring into cultured verse the legend of Santos Vega, and collected all bits that he could find about this famous payador. El Caballo del Gaucho in which he depicts the gaucho's devotion to his horse, and Armonías de la pampa are beautiful poems, and El Pato (a gaucho game) has beauty of presentation and force of action. It glorifies the old pampa where the gaucho showed his skill,

<sup>1</sup>

Coester: Literary History of South America: p. 136



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courage and endurance in a difficult game.

The following stanzas are from this poem, the two opening stanzas:

¡El Pato! juego fuerte  
Del hombre de la pampa,  
Que marca las costumbres  
De un pueblo varonil.  
Para crispar los nervios,  
Para tender los músculos,  
Como el convulso joven,  
En el dolor febril.

Las fiestas populares  
De un pueblo de valientes  
Semejantes a las rudas  
Caricias de león,  
Porque el pampero raudo  
Batiendo en esas frentes  
Parece que inocular  
Vigor al corazón.<sup>1</sup>

d. Ricardo Gutiérrez (1836-1896)

This second writer of the Gutiérrez name--we are to have one more later--was a poet quite after the heart of Bartolomé Mitre, for he wrote in perfect verse and impeccable language two long poems with gaucho theme--

Lázaro and La Fibra Salvaje. These poems show that although he does not speak in the language of the gaucho, yet he sees into the gaucho soul, and portrays in his poems the primitive passions, love, hate and despair, which in turn work deeply on the gaucho heart, unversed in the restraints of civilization, and lead him to the violent deeds of which he is guilty. Ricardo Gutiérrez has also written tragic prose with gaucho theme.



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De un pueblo varonil.  
Para crispar los nervios,  
Para tender los músculos,  
Como el convulso joven,  
En el dolor fértil.

Las fiestas populares  
De un pueblo de valientes  
Gemejantes a las ruinas  
Garzadas de laón,  
Porque el pampero rudo  
Batido en esas frentes  
Parece que inocula  
Vigor al corazón.

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prose with gaucho theme.



## e. Luis L. Domínguez (1819-1898)

Luis L. Domínguez was another of the intellectuals proscribed by Rosas who, when in exile in Montevideo used his skilful pen against the tyrant. He wrote excellent verse as well on national and patriotic subjects for the country from which he had been banished and to which he longed to return, and believed firmly in the doctrine of Echeverría, that of nationalizing the literature of his country.

## 1) El Ombú

His poem descriptive of life on the pampa, El Ombú, has been known in part by memory through three generations of Argentines, and the first stanza is considered so well to be symbolic of Argentina, that it is printed on Christmas cards to be sent to foreign lands, and is also given in many of our text books:

Cada comarca en la tierra  
Tiene su rasgo prominente:  
El Brasil su sol ardiente,  
Minas de plata, el Perú:  
Montevideo, su cerro;  
Argentina, patria hermosa,  
Tiene su pampa grandiosa,  
La pampa tiene el ombú.<sup>1</sup>

In his poem Domínguez made the ombú the real centre of Argentine life. He suggests the mystery of the pampa, the beautiful colors and, as others do not, its material wealth, its products and its animal life where--

<sup>1</sup> Blackwell: Some Spanish American Poets: p. 339-347



Juan L. Borges (1913-1986)

Juan L. Borges was another of the intellectual giants who, in the last half of the twentieth century, enriched the world of letters. He wrote excellent verse as well as fiction and critical studies for the country. His work has been translated and he has been honored to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature of Argentina, and he is believed to be the greatest of Argentine writers.

### 1) El Libro

His poem "Description of a Life in the Desert, El Libro" has been known in part by every generation of Argentine writers, and the first stanza is considered as well to be symbolic of Argentine literature. It is printed on Christmas cards to be sent to foreign lands, and is also given in many of our best books:

Que el mundo sea un libro  
Que el mundo sea un libro  
Que el mundo sea un libro  
Que el mundo sea un libro  
Que el mundo sea un libro  
Que el mundo sea un libro  
Que el mundo sea un libro  
Que el mundo sea un libro

In his poem "Description of a Life in the Desert, El Libro" he suggests the mystery of the desert, the beautiful colors and the animals do not, the material world, its products and its animal life where--



Puesto, en medio del desierto,  
 El ombú, como un amigo,  
 Presta a todos al abrigo  
 De sus ramas, con amor.<sup>1</sup>

His final stanza glorifying the beautiful tree that now, because of the woodman's axe, is becoming almost as extinct as the spirit of the ancient pampa, is this:

Y si en pos de amarga <sup>a</sup>susencia  
 Vuelve el gaucho a su partido,  
 Echa penas al olvido  
 Cuando alcanza a divisar  
 El ombú solemne, aislado,  
 De gallarda, hermosa planta,  
 Que a las nubes se levanta  
 Como faro de aquel mar.

f. Rafael Obligado (1851-1920)

#### 1) The Final Singer

The cultured poet, Rafael Obligado who was pampa born and bred, and gloried in this as his most precious heritage, really brought the gaucho cycle to an end, and to such an end that all the Spanish speaking world felt the thrill and the pathos of the passing.

#### 2) His Message

He heard the mysterious voices of the pampa and sent to the "castizo" of the city, even yet loath to recognize his country's rich heritage of "criollo" verse, this warning:

Si queremos de los hijos nuestros  
 Tan solo una mirada  
 No de frío desdén, de noble orgullo,



Puesto, en medio del desierto,  
 El ombligo, como un amigo,  
 Presta a todos el abrigo  
 De sus ramas, con amor.

His final stanza glorifying the beautiful tree that  
 now, because of the woodman's axe, is becoming almost an ex-  
 tinct as the spirit of the ancient pampa, is this:

Y al en pos de amarga suadencia  
 Vuelve el gaucho a su partido,  
 Echa cenizas al olvido  
 Cuando alcanza a divisar  
 El ombligo solenne, aislado,  
 De gelarida, hermosa planta,  
 Que a las nubes se levanta  
 Como faro de aquel mar.

7. Rafael Obligado (1851-1930)

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 to the "castles" of the city, even yet loath to recognize  
 his country's rich heritage of "criollo" verse, this

warning:

Si quieramos de los hijos nuestros  
 Tan solo una mirada  
 No de fero desden, de noble orgullo,



The country youth knew by heart the verses of Obligado's which expressed  
 Sigamos esa estrella que nos guía,  
 Lancémonos nosotros sus hermanos,  
 Por la senda inmortal de Echeverría.

Mitre and Echeverría were Obligado's literary masters, and so well did he interpret their combined creed that he has often been called the unofficial poet laureate of Argentina, for high and low, cultured and uncultured listened enthralled to the harmonies of his verse and the heart appeal of his thought.

### 3) His Gaucho Poems

Obligado wrote many poems but the one which was his greatest, without question, was Santos Vega which is really four poems on that theme:

El Alma del Payador  
 La Prenda del Payador  
 El Himno del Payador  
 La Muerte del Payador

#### 2 a) His Poetic Creed

In these poems, Obligado gave a noble character to the fast vanishing gaucho, and brought clearly to the reader the "pampa grandiosa" which he knew and loved and of which he sings, at times sadly, for the new civilization is taking from it the solitude and mystery that had belonged to it throughout the ages.

In La Muerte del Payador he expresses this:

Era, en medio del reposo  
 De la Pampa ayer dormida,  
 La visión ennoblecida  
 De trabajo, antes no honrado;  
 La promesa del arado  
 Que abre cauces a la vida.<sup>1</sup>



Por la senda inmortal de Echeverría.  
 Jamás nosotras sus hermanas,  
 Sigamos esa estrecha que nos guía.

Mitre and Echeverría were Obligado's literary masters.

and so well did he interpret their combined creed that he

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El Alma del Payador  
 La Prueba del Payador  
 El Himno del Payador  
 La Muerte del Payador

### (a) His Poetic Creed

In these poems, Obligado gave a noble character to the

last vanishing gaucho, and brought clearly to the reader the

"pampa grandiosa" which he knew and loved and of which he

sings, at times sadly, for the new civilization is taking

from it the solitude and mystery that had belonged to it

throughout the ages.

In La Muerte del Payador he expresses this:

Era, en medio del reposo  
 De la Pampa ayer dormida,  
 La visión olvidada  
 De trabajo, antes no honrado  
 La promesa del arado  
 Que abre cauces a la vida.



The country youth knew by heart the verse of Obligado's which expressed the creed for them both. It is the last stanza of El Alma del Payador, quoted also on page 84:

Yo, que en la tierra he nacido  
 Donde ese genio<sup>2</sup> ha cantado,  
 Y el pampero ha respirado  
 Que el payador ha nutrido,  
 Beso este suelo querido  
 Que a mis caricias se entrega,  
 Mientras de orgullo me anega,  
 La convicción de que es mía  
 ¡La Patria de Echeverría,  
 La tierra de Santos Vega!

b) Theme of the Poems

(1) El Alma del Payador

In El Alma del Payador the gaucho relates that the spirit of Santos Vega had played at night ghostly music on a guitar which he had left near a well:

Suena el preludio de un canto  
 Entre las cuerdas dormidas,  
 Cuerdas que vibran heridas  
 Como por gotas de llanto!<sup>1</sup>

(2) La Prenda del Payador

La Prenda del Payador brings the ghost of the famous singer to a meeting with his beloved, to whom he plays sweet music and then disappears as a shadow on the horizon. There are in this poem beautiful word pictures and delicate touches of love:

Luego, inflamando el vacío,  
 Se levantó la alborada,  
 Con esa blanca mirada  
 Que hace chispear el rocío,  
 Y cuando el sol en el río

1 Blackwell: Some Spanish American Poets: p. 353  
 2 Santos Vega



The country youth knew by heart the verses of Obligado's which expressed the creed for them both. It is the last stanza of El Alma del Payador, quoted also on page 84:

Yo, que en la tierra he nacido  
Donde ese canto ha cantado,  
Y el pampero ha respirado  
Que el payador ha nutrido,  
Beso este suelo querido  
Que a mis caricias se entrega,  
Mientras de orgullo me enorgullo,  
La convicción de que es mía  
La Patria de Bohemios,  
La tierra de Santos Vega!

(b) Theme of the Poems

(1) El Alma del Payador

In El Alma del Payador the gaucho relates that the spirit of Santos Vega had played at night ghostly music on a guitar which he had left near a well:

Suena el preludio de un canto  
Entre las cuerdas dormidas,  
Guedas que vibran heridas  
Como por gotas de llanto!

(2) La Frencha del Payador

La Frencha del Payador brings the ghost of the famous singer to a meeting with his beloved, to whom he plays sweet music and then disappears as a shadow on the horizon. There are in this poem beautiful word pictures and delicate touches of love:

Luego, llamando al viento,  
Se levanta la alborada,  
Con esa blanca mirada  
Que hace olvidar el rocío,  
Y cuando el sol en el río



Vertió su lumbre primera,  
Se vió una sombra ligera  
En occidente ocultarse,  
Y el alto ombú balancearse  
Sobre una antigua tapera.<sup>1</sup>

(3) El Himno del Payador

El Himno del Payador gives the supposed patriotic call of Santos Vega to the gauchos urging them to throw off the yoke of Spain and be free.

¡Ah! ¡Si es mi voz impotente  
Para arrojar, con vosotros,  
Nuestra lanza y nuestros potros  
Por el vasto continente;  
Si jamás independiente  
Veo el suelo en que he cantado,  
No me entierren en sagrado  
Donde una cruz me recuerde:  
Entiérrenme en campo verde  
Donde me pise el ganado! <sup>2</sup>

(4) La Muerte del Payador

The last and best of the series La Muerte del Payador is the famous legend of the conquest in a payada, of Santos Vega by an unknown payador, Juan Sin Ropa, believed by the country people to be the devil in disguise of the impoverished immigrant who has taken the music from the pampa breeze and the mystery from its vastness.

An old gaucho says:

¡Y si, cantando murió  
Aquel que vivió cantando,  
Fué, decía suspirando,  
Porque el diablo lo venció!<sup>3</sup>

Santos Vega was then really conquered by the music which embodied "el grito poderoso" of the new pampa which no longer belonged to him.

- |   |                                         |        |
|---|-----------------------------------------|--------|
| 1 | Blackwell: Some Spanish American Poets: | p. 359 |
| 2 | ibid                                    | p. 367 |
| 3 | ibid                                    | p. 379 |



Verdido en humbre primero,  
 Se vio una sombra ligera  
 En occidente ocultarse,  
 Y el alto omel palanquero  
 Sobre una antigua tapera.

(3) El Himno del Payador

El Himno del Payador gives the supposed patriotic call

of Santos Vega to the rancheros urging them to throw off the  
 yoke of Spain and be free.

¡Ah! así es mi voz impetuosa  
 Para arrojar, con vosotros,  
 Nuestra lanza y nuestros potros  
 Por el vasto continente;  
 Si jamás independizante  
 Veo el suelo en que he nacido,  
 No me entiendo en agrado  
 Donde una cruz me recuerda:  
 Entierreme en campo verde  
 Donde me pise el ganado! S

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This final poem, the "swan song" as it were of the payador type of poetry is really a synthesis of all the poetry of this type, a beautiful finished product embodying all the requisites. We have the open pampa, the country folks gathered under a majestic ombú to listen to the payada, the beloved and symbolic Santos Vega, and an unknown challenger. We have a brief glimpse of Santos Vega, we hear his musical strains embodying the beauty of the pampa, and then come other strange but beautiful chords of a different music more powerful than his, and he is vanquished. He disappears from their midst engulfed in the flames of the ombú which was set on fire by his demon opponent, and only his spirit is left to send forth its sigh on the wings of the pampero.

#### 4) Conclusion

Rafael Obligado, with the courage of a real genius, had taken what might have seemed a time worn theme, for the mighty voices of the past had sung of Santos Vega and his deeds. Godoy, Mitre and Ascásubi as well as the countless unnamed singers of the pampa had made this famous payador, who was the synthesis of all pampa singers, famous in death as in life.

The task, then, which this later poet so well accomplished, was to revivify him in glowing verse so that when his countrymen could no longer have actual memories of the payadors



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of the pampa who, in spite of all hardships, had kept music in the hearts of the conquerors of a mighty desert, their hearts and souls could be stirred by this final epitaph, written by one who had known and loved the unbroken pampa and its gallant band.

Rafael Obligado's personal feeling of sorrow that "the old order passeth, giving place to new" is shown in his last poem Protesta:

La pampa de mis cantos ya no existe,  
Con el salvaje se extinguió el desierto,  
La majestad de esa llanura triste  
Bajo el cuchillo del arado ha muerto.<sup>1</sup>

In the latter part he says he has tears in his heart for the changes that come because they must come:

Salute--La patria de un glorioso abismo  
Surge, y pide a sus bardos nuevo canto,  
Pero yo, en lo más hondo de mí mismo  
Siento la honrada ingenuidad del llanto.<sup>1</sup>

g. Francisco Soto y Calvo

It seems almost an anticlimax after the beautiful verses of Rafael Obligado to mention any other gaucho poems, but there is one written in 1899 by Francisco Soto Y Calvo that is the last really gaucho poem. It is Nastasio, the story of a gaucho of the old school named Anastasio, who in poetic cadence bewails his bitter fate when a terrific hurricane has robbed him of home and family. His sorrow is intense and his death pathetic, and the beautiful feeling

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from J. M. Rohde: Las ideas estéticas en la literatura Argentina: p. 298



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In the latter part he says he has tears in his heart for the changes that come because they must come:

Salute--la patria de un glorioso apiano  
Surge, y pide a sus bardos nuevo canto,  
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Siento la honda ingenuidad del llanto.

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descriptions of the pampa make it no unworthy ending for that cycle of poetry which had played so strong a part in the literary and cultural life of Argentina throughout the nineteenth century.

#### 4. Prose Narrative

##### a. Relative Value

This paper might well close at this point if the title allowed, for the poetry is the only true expression of the gaucho theme, and the prose and the drama to be briefly treated now, belong here, with two signal exceptions, only because of the protagonist or the setting. The real spirit belongs only to poetic thought.

##### Early Prose

The folklore which began the narrative prose of Argentina was wholly "gauchesco", or Indian, for much of it was adapted from Indian legends bequeathed as an oral heritage from the legends of the payador poems already mentioned. Later came the longer narratives adapted from the pampa stories, and finally, at a later stage when fame had come to cultured authors by their adoption of gaucho themes, some of the cultured writers decided to follow along the path of Echeverría, and many novels of this type were written.

Taking the prose literature as a whole there is a unity of type and development that becomes almost monotonous--



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the duel with the knife for honor's sake, the persecution of the gaucho by legal authorities when the duelist has killed his man, and the assertion of the right of the gaucho to be his own judge of the punishment to be given for an offence. The duel, of course, had been brought from Spain by the Andalusian, ever sensitive of his honor, and it became the law of the pampa, and this furnished a theme always a favorite with an Argentine audience. For this reason it had attracted to it, authors of real literary ability who gave their public manly men who fought face to face in honorable battle, confident that Divine Justice would correctly balance the scales.

b. Domingo Faustino Sarmiento (1811-1888)

1) A Different View of the Gaucho

We have found that up to the present the gaucho has been presented somewhat as a hero or at least as one who, though untaught perhaps in the rudiments of formal education, yet had a culture of his own that lifted him from the depths.

Domingo F. Sarmiento, the writer whom we are now considering held no brief for the gaucho of whom he wrote, but considered his ignorance and his lawlessness as the real enemy with which his country must contend, for his isolation and ignorance, his belief that the knife is an answer to an injustice, his contempt for a civilization based on intelligence and education, in fact his general disregard of law and



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order was the cause of his country's downfall as he saw it in the Rosas regime.

## 2) Sarmiento, the Man and Educator

Sarmiento, who was probably the greatest genius among the opponents of Rosas, was a self-educated man who rose from the ranks of the army to the presidency of his country, and whose name became known everywhere as the great educator of Argentina whose most constructive work was that of introducing education throughout the pampa, in order that never again could exist the conditions of which he wrote.

It is interesting to note that some of his ideas in education came from Boston, for he was here, studying the educational methods of Horace Mann, when he was elected president. The first principal of the Normal School named for him was chosen by him while he was in Boston. She was at the time a teacher in the Framingham Normal School.

## 3) His Book -- Facundo Quiroga

Sarmiento was a provincial and lived at San Juan just below the Andes, and for this reason his book, Facundo Quiroga, o Civilización y Barbarie written in 1845, which has been called the greatest prose tale of the century in his country, is full of first hand information, for the tyrant Quiroga was of the province of San Juan. The greatest part of the book which is a sort of biography of the provincial leader of the Rosas regime, portrays the atrocities of Quiroga, and it served as



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one of the many weapons hurled against Rosas by those ex-patriated by him, for Sarmiento was in Chile actively engaged in newspaper work.

The first chapters of the book, however, are those that give it its lasting merit for they contain brilliant descriptions of gauchos and gaucho gatherings, and above all superb descriptions of the vast and lonely pampa. This book has been translated into English by Mrs. Horace Mann, who has well interpreted the thought and language of this distinguished thinker who performed some of the best work for his country as superintendent of the national system of education, after his term as president was completed.

Sarmiento, although painting the ignorance of the gaucho as a basic cause of many of his country's ills, yet was sufficiently just, to recognize his real contribution to the cause of liberty in earlier times, and to give words of praise to his poetic muse.

c. Leopoldo Lugones (1874 - )

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The greatest prose narrative which really can be classed as a gaucho production is "La Guerra Gaucha" of Leopoldo Lugones, published in 1905, which is a series of stories of the War for Independence. The author's research into the annals of Argentine history brought forth many dramatic and picturesque events which he uses in such a way as to make



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the truth as absorbingly interesting as any fiction could be. He is classed as a "Modernista" in his literary faith, and this undoubtedly explains some of his over-graphic figures and a vocabulary which includes many unusual words or those of foreign extraction, which make the book hard reading for all except the erudite.

The gauchos of the story are not those of the plain, but instead the mountaineers of the Andes who, in a sort of guerrilla warfare, gave defeat after defeat to the Spanish soldiers.

In this book we see the gaucho as a hero and again as a villain. We see him as the patriot fighting the good fight in the snows of the Andes or in the drouth of the desert. Lugones makes his readers feel the patriotism, the stoicism in suffering, the personal religious feeling that is almost pantheistic, and the doglike devotion to the great leaders who with his help brought independence to the southern continent. Poor and wretched are these gauchos, but of the body only, for the grandeur of the mountains which surround them finds echo in their intrepid hearts. The great intensity of their zeal is expressed in their actions, for no sacrifice is too great to make in the cause of liberty.

The series of episodes are only partly historical and the story which is considered the finest is "Sorpresa". In it we see the gaucho vigorous, abstemious, alert but



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melancholy from his privations, and perhaps by his Indian heritage as well.

The gaucho, his horse, his knife, the forest not the plain, and the vidalita which he improvises and sings of the exploits which are really his, these are realistically presented in this modern book, the author of which, has the power to see deeply into the gaucho heart and mind, and the genius vividly to portray what he sees. It is really a great book, sometimes called the prose epic of Argentina.

In another poem, Al Payador, Lugones extols Martín Fierro as the epic of the nation, and in his own poem he has written one of the finest specimens of Argentine poetry.

#### d. Eduardo Gutiérrez, Novelist

Eduardo Gutiérrez, the most successful of the gaucho novelists, developed his stories with more or less unanimity of type representing the gaucho as noble and honorable in his motives, but ever in conflict with the authorities because of his tendency to settle his own questions of honor.

##### 1. The Type

So well and so dramatically did he present his theme that many of his novels were taken over with little change to the theatre. The hero and his family usually represent the "unwritten law" of the country rather barbarous at times but wholly satisfying to his public. The enemies of the



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protagonist are the real law and order, just as in Martín Fierro, and the sympathy of the country readers at least, is with the infringers of the law.

This characterization of the gaucho as a lawbreaker was a later development in literature, for the earlier works made him the generous patriot desiring only his country's good. Gutiérrez wrote at a time when the gaucho was in vain defending his existence against the inroads of the new civilization, and was hardly at his best.

The author made use of police reports, and then filled the literary sections of the newspapers with imaginary exploits of well known real gauchos quite largely of the criminal type. Juan Moreira, the assassin, and El Jorabado, the thief, became household names. Eduardo Gutiérrez, however, had a real affection for the gaucho and his novels show this sincerity of feeling.

## 2) Novels

His gaucho novels are many, but the best known are-- Juan Moreira, Juan Cuello, Juan Sin Patria, Pastor Luna, El Mataco, Santos Vega, and Una Amistad hasta la Muerte which is really the second part of Santos Vega. His gauchos are not all heroes, nor are they ever really villainous, for as a whole he is more realistic than most of the other novelists of the type. He has also written



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historical and political works, and the gaucho is represented in most of them although not as the protagonist. Gutiérrez frequently uses the dialect of the gaucho to give atmosphere to his episodes of pampa life, and these stories are the most popular in the country, where he is the favorite prose writer. In the account of the development of the national theatre later in this paper we shall have more of the work of this versatile author.

e. Manuel Ugarte (1880 - - )

A series of stories written by Manuel Ugarte show his skill in depicting pampa life and the social conditions there. Cuentos de la Pampa have realistic details of life on the estancias and explains the gaucho superstitions and beliefs, some of which are a determining cause for his different standards of life and ethics.

Other novelists might be mentioned but they are not conspicuous in any of their works, so we shall pass on to the dramatic contributions of the gaucho type.



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## f. Ricardo Güiraldes( 1886 - - )

Ricardo Güiraldes was a follower of the ideas of Hernández though his work was in prose. He had real power in painting scenes of pampa life and his stories of the rodeos, the branding of the cattle and the festivities of the country villages make pleasant reading and are graphic and true to life.

## g. Hugo Wast (1883 - )

Under the pseudonym Hugo Wast, Gustavo Martínez Zuviría is one of the Argentine novelists best known outside his country, and one of the most popular there. He, like Eduardo Gutiérrez, has utilized the pampa ranch as the setting for many of his novels although his characters are not "old school" gauchos.

His masterpiece, Desierto de Piedra, realistically depicts life on an estancia with an interesting story development, well portrayed characters, and vivid country descriptions. The contrast between the unambitious "criollo" and the industrious immigrant is an important phase of the story.

Other novelists might be mentioned but they are not conspicuous in any of their works, so we shall pass on to the dramatic contributions of the gaucho type.



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in painting scenes of rural life and his version of the  
novels, the blending of the cattle and the festivities of the  
country villages with pleasant reading and art, graphics and  
time to life.

## 2. Jorge Icaza (1893-1927)

Under the pseudonym Jorge Icaza, Gustavo Barrios, author  
of the Argentine novelists that lived outside the  
country, and one of the most popular novelists. He, like Icaza,  
wrote about the Indian and the Indian people, but Icaza wrote  
many of his novels although his characters are not "old school"  
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## His masterpiece, Don Segundo Sombra, is a masterpiece of

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Indian is important in an important phase of the story.  
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the dramatic contributions of the Argentine novel.



## 5. THE DRAMA

Again it may be repeated that the drama like the prose narrative, can in no way be compared in value with the gaucho poetry, for the finest qualities of the gaucho and the pampa can only be expressed in verse. However, it is true that after Martín Fierro, there seemed to be little success with the gaucho verse, perhaps because all others seemed a sort of anticlimax to that great poem. On the other hand the gaucho movement in the drama became strong, for the theatre of the city had been little affected by the gaucho theme in the earlier days, and later offered a new field in which the theory of nationalism of Echeverría could profitably be exploited.

### a. The Primitive Drama

The native theatre of the Indians and the early pampa settlers had two distinct elements, the religious and the profane. The religious included the liturgical dances of the Indians which the gauchos took over and interpreted in gestures and action, and the profane built up from the themes of payador who brought first his songs, then his dialogues and gesticulations, with sometimes a chorus half sung, half chanted. These served as a sort of nucleus from which was built up an indigenous drama.

In many of the country dances such as el gato, el cielito, la chacarera and el pericón the actions were made



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In many of the country dances such as el gato, el clafito, la chascarrera and el periodo the actions were made



to interpret the thought, usually with two principals, and often with a chorus from all the dancers. Thus the only type of early native drama was the "gauchesco" while the city drama was as in Spain.

About 1790 there was an anonymous sainete entitled El Amor de la Estanciera which became popular. The plot was dramatic and picturesque, though rather crude, and it unfolded a story of gaucho love. Its value lies not in the story, nor in the beauty of the "gauchesco" dialogue although it has this quality, but in its priority as a dramatic expression of pampa life somewhat different from the dialogues of the dance.

#### b. Diálogos

In some of the Diálogos Patrióticos of Hidalgo he infused payadas and other themes requiring action so that, collected, they might almost form of themselves a rustic drama. This is also true, of course, of the early origins of the Spanish theatre so that here again we have the composite characteristics of the Spanish and the Indian, such as the gaucho showed in his more laconic poetry.

Among other early writers Labardén is well worthy of special mention.

#### c. Manuel Jose de Labardén (1754-1809)

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was one of the first to show strongly the powerful influence of the pampa and the great river which helped to develop it. This poem was published in 1801 in the first number of the first periodical ever printed in Buenos Aires.

His play, Siripo, is one of the earliest dramatic pieces and was first presented at the Carnival of 1789. The story of this play was later repeated in many forms for it really came from the early chronicles. It is the story of an Indian raid on a pampa village, and the taking prisoner of a gaucho husband and wife, both of whom choose death by torture rather than to accept the ignominious alternative offered to them by the Indian "cacique".

For a long time after the early dramatic pieces mentioned, there was no real development, for the man of talent considered that gaucho themes were scarcely worthy of his artistry and the demands of the theatre audiences in the city were for the classic type only or those that followed the Spanish drama.

#### d. Nationalization of the Theatre

When, however, masters of literature like Echeverría and Mitre advocated native themes, and signal success had come to the poets who interpreted rustic life, then there came a call for dramatic representation of the type, and some critics even went so far as to demand a completely national theatre set with local color, to replace the wholly



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Spanish atmosphere which then filled the Argentine stage. This demand was obeyed for a time, but the themes were too limited for cultured writers to devote themselves to this entirely, although the movement had a limited success. The Academia Argentina, which was a literary society formed to promote the theatre according to the Americanization ideals of Echeverría and Mitre, prepared a dictionary of rustic colloquialisms so that dramatists unfamiliar with them might gain from their use the "flavor of the soil".

e. Eduardo Gutiérrez, Dramatist

The nationalizing of the theatre came at first almost wholly from dramatizing the gaucho type of novel and especially those of Eduardo Gutiérrez. Juan Moreira offered one of the most prolific opportunities for dramatizing, and he became a very popular personage on the stage. The texts of these dramas were not written, as the actors made their own interpretations or used the words of the novel, and even real gauchos rode their horses onto the stage.

Juan Moreira was even put into an opera by Arturo Berutti who followed closely the theme of the novel.

The gaucho of this drama and novel is the one who, to the Argentine public, exemplifies the qualities of the pampa race, - personal bravery, disdain for the severe and perhaps unjust laws, but of complete personal integrity.



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f. Florencio Sánchez (1875-1910)<sup>1</sup>

The only drama of the well known writer, Florencio Sanchez of Uruguay and Argentina, which belongs in this group is La Gringa. This is a drama of the gaucho of the old school, fighting, not against the Indian, nor against his country's enemies, but against the encroachments of that industrious tiller of the soil, the European aggressor, who is forcing him into banditry or into that which is worse to him, the role of laborer on the land where his ancestors had been free. In the play he is conquered and the children of "el gaucho" and "la gringa" are a composite of the characteristics of the old and the new life on the pampa.

## g. Martín Coronado (1856-1919)

Martin Coronado was already known as the writer of brilliant poems when he began to adapt his poetry to the drama in the narration of dramatic incidents of pampa life. One of his early works was La Rosa Blanca which perhaps shows immaturity but has some typically native touches but presented with cultured pen. A stanza from this poem serves to show the type:

Aquí sobre la llanura  
Que sin límites se extiende,  
Cada vez que el alba asciende  
El nombre de Dios murmura.  
Aquí ostenta la mañana  
Más esplendor, más belleza  
Aquí tiene la grandeza  
De la tierra Americana.<sup>2</sup>

1

Florencio Sánchez, a Uruguayan, is included here because much of his writing was done in Argentina and the Argentine pampa was a favorite setting as in "La Gringa".

<sup>2</sup>Quoted by Rohde: Las ideas estéticas en la literatura argentina: p. 275



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¡Ah! sobre la llanura  
Que sin límites se extiende,  
Cada vez que el alba radiante  
El nombre de Dios reparte.  
¡Ah! ostenta la mañana  
Mas esplendor, mas belleza  
¡Ah! tiene la granada  
De la tierra americana.

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Quoted by Rohrer: Las ideas estéticas en la literatura Argentina: p. 275



Coronado mingled in almost all his works the indigenous touches with the European, so that his rusticity is less apparent although his characters are true to type, but perhaps of the later gaucho more stabilized by the regularity of his life but likewise less picturesque.

#### h. Martiniano Leguizamón

Leguizamón also writes poetic drama and Calandria is a noble addition to the gaucho theatre. His descriptions bring back the old pampa, the brilliant moon, the starry skies, the silence and the solitude which make his gaucho of a nobler type than the other late writers. He makes him of the vanishing race of the pampa troubadour with his ideals in his heart though there may be more sordidness in his life of labor on the new pampa. He is not the Robin Hood of the pampa, nor is he a homeless wanderer on a trackless desert. His home is the pampa of fields of golden grain and in Calandria he is re-born as:

Pero ha nacido amigazo,  
El criollo trabajador.<sup>1</sup>

As Leguizamón sees him in his home, his ranch, his farm he is the new gaucho, but showing his mixture of blood--the Andalusian, and the Indian who bequeaths:

The mournful soul of thine ill fated race  
A heritage thou gavest to the Spaniard  
Of melancholy, that no cure may know.

. . . . .

It was perhaps a deep and sacred mystery,  
Full of wild grandeurs mixed with shadows gray,  
That fused the Indian, Saracen and Spaniard,  
To make the New World's race which lives today.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Rohde: Las ideas estéticas: p. 284

<sup>2</sup> Ricardo J. Freyre: Los Antepasados, Translated by A. S. Blackwell: Some Spanish American Poets: p. 458



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born as:

Por lo he nacido amigable  
El criollo trabajador.

As Leguizamón sees him in his home, his ranch, his farm he is the new gaucho, but showing his mixture of blood--the Andalusian, and the Indian who beguette:

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It was perhaps a deep and sacred mystery,  
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That fused the Indian, Saracen and Spaniard,  
To make the New World's race which lives today.



### III. CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to show that the gaucho theme has been distinct in all stages of the literature of Argentina, from the earliest days until the present. It has also indicated that this may be considered a real cycle of literature in itself, for since language, environment and racial culture are the sources of a literature, although Argentina would seem to have, and really has in the cities, the same heritage as the rest of Spanish America, yet the definite modification of these three sources, as shown in the pampa literature, has developed a really different art, indigenous in theme and varied in form. We have noted the continuity of this theme as an inspiration for literary expression for more than a century, and varying in literary value as it does, it yet has shown itself a vital inspiration in every phase of the national literature, and has directly and indirectly made itself a leaven in the mixing into a homogeneous nation of that cosmopolitan daughter of Spain, the Argentine republic, where man has conquered the desert and brought from it not only great material wealth, but also a rich literary heritage to bequeath to his sons and daughters of a later day.



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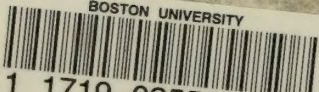
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